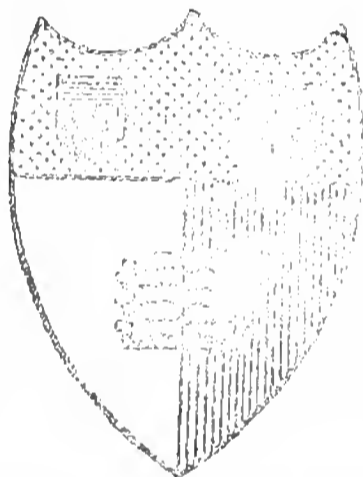




CORNELL UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES
ITHACA, N. Y. 14853



JOHN M. OLIN
LIBRARY

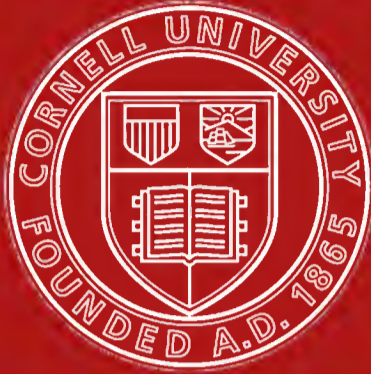
Cornell University Library
DA 536.M71F27

Life of the Right. Hon. Sir William Mole



3 1924 028 037 624

olin



Cornell University
Library

The original of this book is in
the Cornell University Library.

There are no known copyright restrictions in
the United States on the use of the text.

<http://www.archive.org/details/cu31924028037624>

LIFE OF THE RIGHT HON.
SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH, BART.,
M.P., F.R.S.





Walker & Co. sculp. pl. 1.

The Right Hon. Sir William. Molesworth, Bart., U.P.

1854.

Life of the Right Hon.
Sir William Molesworth,
Bart., M.P., F.R.S., by Mrs.
Fawcett, LL.D.

London
MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
1901

All rights reserved

“EVERY such war [with an external foe] is necessarily an Imperial war ; the troops employed in it are employed for Imperial purposes, and consequently their expenses ought to be paid by the Imperial Government ; though in certain cases it would not be unreasonable to expect that the Colonies should assist the Empire both with troops and money ; *and I feel convinced that if the Colonies were governed as they ought to be, they would gladly and willingly come to the aid of the mother country in any just and necessary war.* They would do as the men of our old North American plantations did during a war with France, when they willingly bore a large portion of the burden of the contest with that monarchy and its Indian allies, and in every way proved themselves to be the hardy and generous sons of England.”—House of Commons speech by Sir William Molesworth, April 10, 1851, on a motion for the reduction of Colonial expenditure.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	I
CHAPTER I	
PARENTAGE AND EDUCATION	7
CHAPTER II	
ENTRANCE INTO POLITICAL LIFE	33
CHAPTER III	
“THE LONDON REVIEW”	54
CHAPTER IV	
THE REFORM CLUB	70
CHAPTER V	
THE ORANGE LODGES	82
CHAPTER VI	
FAMILY AFFAIRS—1836	101

CHAPTER VII

	PAGE
DECLINE OF PHILOSOPHIC RADICALISM	114

CHAPTER VIII

SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH AS A COLONIAL REFORMER —THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE	135
--	-----

CHAPTER IX

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATIONS	154
---	-----

CHAPTER X

CANADA	182
------------------	-----

CHAPTER XI

THE EDITION OF HOBBS AND SIR W. MOLESWORTH'S RETIREMENT FROM PARLIAMENT	206
--	-----

CHAPTER XII

1841-45—LIFE AT PENCARROW—MARRIAGE	226
--	-----

CHAPTER XIII

SOUTHWARK ELECTION, 1845, AND SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH'S POSITION ON QUESTIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY	243
---	-----

CONTENTS

vii

CHAPTER XIV

	PAGE
AGAIN IN PARLIAMENT—WORK ON COLONIAL REFORM	264

CHAPTER XV

THE LAST OF TRANSPORTATION	282
--------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVI

SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH JOINS LORD ABERDEEN'S GOVERNMENT AS FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS	295
---	-----

CHAPTER XVII

SOUTH AFRICA IN 1852-54	310
-----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER XVIII

CLOSING YEARS	326
-------------------------	-----

APPENDIX

DESCENT OF SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH FROM HENDER MOLESWORTH, THE FIRST BARONET	343
LIST OF SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH'S HOUSE OF COMMONS SPEECHES ON COLONIAL SUBJECTS	344
CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF CHIEF EVENTS IN SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH'S LIFE	345
INDEX	347

INTRODUCTION

It will be generally conceded that the most important political event of recent times is the demonstration of the strength of the tie which unites Great Britain with her Colonies, and that this tie is not only capable of bearing the tension of war, but has gathered strength through that very tension.

The great difference in the reciprocal feelings between the mother country and the Colonies at the present moment, and even a few years ago, can be referred by almost every one to personal experience and memory. But the extraordinary difference in this feeling between the present time and fifty or sixty years ago can only be gathered by those who take the trouble to make themselves acquainted with events too recent for history and too remote for politics. Such books as Miss Martineau's *History of the Thirty Years' Peace*,

1815-1845, teem with evidence of Colonial discontent and disloyalty : discontent and disloyalty which should be entered in the National Ledger as "for value received." In one of Miss Martineau's concluding chapters, she says : "Next to Ireland, our Colonies continue to be the opprobrium of our empire." The half-century which has passed since these words were written has converted the "opprobrium of our empire" into its greatest glory and pride. A group of men, represented inside Parliament by Lord Durham, Charles Buller and Sir William Molesworth, and outside Parliament by Edward Gibbon Wakefield and John Stuart Mill, deserve the chief credit of this brilliant transformation. They saw, and gradually educated the public to see, that the true remedy for Colonial discontent could be found only by giving every Colony, as soon as circumstances rendered it possible, self-government and free representative institutions. When the small band of Colonial Reformers began their work they had against them the whole official class who believed that Colonial self-government would be inconsistent with the sovereignty of Great Britain, and also the popular political philosophy of the day, represented first by Bentham, and later by Cobden, which favoured the complete

relinquishment of that sovereignty. It says much for their practical sagacity and statesmanship that the Colonial Reformers were able to make way against such odds.

The settlement of Canada after the rebellion of 1837-38 was so brilliant an achievement, that the names of Lord Durham and of Charles Buller will always be illuminated by its fame. John Stuart Mill has so many claims on the remembrance and gratitude of the present generation that there is no need to light a taper at his shrine. Edward Gibbon Wakefield and Sir William Molesworth stand in a different category, and there appeared for some years a chance that the work of these two men as Colonial Reformers and as founders of the present Colonial system of Great Britain might fall into undeserved neglect. Dr. Richard Garnett has recently written an interesting monograph on Wakefield, and it is my desire to perform, however inadequately, the same office for Molesworth: to introduce him to the present generation and show them how much they owe to him. He belonged to the race of intrepid invalids. He hardly knew the meaning of the word health, and his life ended at the age of forty-five. But he was an incessant and indefatigable worker, and he

has left his mark for all time on the Colonial history of Great Britain. He foresaw, as very few did in his time, that the root of Colonial loyalty could flourish only in Colonial freedom. In 1851, when actual experience of Colonial relations was one long record of discontent verging again and again on rebellion, he raised the question of Colonial expenditure in the House of Commons, and in the course of his speech used the following words: "Every such war" [with an external foe] "is necessarily an imperial war; the troops employed in it are employed for imperial purposes, and consequently their expenses ought to be paid by the Imperial Government; though in certain cases it would not be unreasonable to expect that the Colonies should assist the Empire both with troops and with money, *and I feel convinced that if the Colonies were governed as they ought to be, they would gladly and willingly come to the aid of the mother country in any just and necessary war*: they would do as the men of our old North American plantations did during a war with France, when they willingly bore a large part of the burden of the contest with that monarchy and its Indian allies, and in every way proved themselves to be the hardy and generous sons of England."

The prophecy of 1851 has been amply fulfilled in 1899 and 1901. Sir William Molesworth not only uttered the prophecy but rendered its fulfilment possible by helping to base our Colonial policy on broad and generous statesmanship. Such a man has a strong claim on the gratitude of the present generation. He and a handful of friends laboured, and we have entered into the fruits of their labours. An acknowledgment of what we owe to those who have gone before is one of the strongest of the links binding the present with the past. Is it permissible to refer to another small link in that chain, the interest in which is largely personal to myself? Almost exactly forty-one years ago (October 1860) Henry Fawcett, young and unknown, offered himself as a parliamentary candidate for the borough of Southwark, the constituency which had been represented by Sir William Molesworth at the time of his death, five years earlier. Henry Fawcett stood as an independent Radical in opposition to the official Liberal candidate, and he described himself to the constituency as a political follower of Sir William Molesworth. Needless to say he was unsuccessful, but it was his introduction to practical political life, and it is a source of some interest that the

younger man associated himself with the views and aims of the elder.

It is the object of the following pages to render accessible some account of the political work of Sir William Molesworth and to give a picture of his personality. My task has been greatly facilitated by the generous confidence of Sir William's only surviving sister, Mrs. Richard Ford of Pencarrow. She possesses a large collection of letters and other documents relating to her distinguished brother, which she has placed unreservedly at my disposal. It would have been impossible for me to have given even the barest outline of Sir William's life without her help and co-operation, for which I take this opportunity of expressing my sincere gratitude.

CHAPTER I

PARENTAGE AND EDUCATION

THE Molesworths of Pencarrow, in the county of Cornwall, are a family of genuine antiquity. One of their traditions is that an ancestor, Sir Walter de Molesworth, accompanied Prince Edward, afterwards Edward I., to the Holy Land in 1270; another ancestor, John Molesworth, was certainly "Auditor of Cornwall" in the time of Queen Elizabeth. It was he who settled at Pencarrow. Hender Molesworth, grandson of this John, was President of the Council of Jamaica in 1684 and subsequently Governor of the island. He identified himself with the Whigs of 1688, and he is said to have been the first baronet created by William III. The patent is dated 19th July 1689. A succession of Molesworths (two Johns and a William) represented Cornish constituencies from the beginning of the eighteenth century till almost its close. The marriages of the Molesworths gener-

ally added strength in the form of either money, brains or beauty to the original stock. One of the most notable of these unions was made in the eighteenth century, when the Sir William Molesworth of that day married Miss Ourry, a lady in whose veins ran Huguenot blood. She was descended from Louis Ourry, born at Blois in 1682, three years before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. In 1707 his fidelity to his religion drove him from his native country; he came to England and received a commission in the English army. He and his wife left a position of wealth and influence in France. Of the many valuables in their possession, they were able to bring away only a pearl necklace;¹ plate and other treasures were left concealed in France. The Ourrys quickly identified themselves with their adopted country. Louis, the original fugitive, as has been seen, entered the British Army, and of his four sons, one followed his father's profession and the other three entered the Navy. From one of these latter, who to Huguenot blood added the training and traditions of a British Admiral, the subject of these pages was descended. In the *Lives of British Admirals*, vol. v. p. 113, may still be read how, "in November 1760, Captain Ourry of the *Actæon* chased a large privateer and drove her on shore between Cape Barfleur and La

¹ Still in the possession of their descendants, the Miss Lemprières of Pelham, Alton, Hampshire.

Hogue, and his cutter scoured the coast and took or destroyed forty vessels of considerable burden which carried on a great fishing near Dieppe." Admiral Ourry was afterwards made Commissioner of Plymouth ; his wife was a Cornish heiress and their daughter married Sir William Molesworth, the sixth baronet, and became the mother of Sir Arscott Ourry Molesworth, the father of our Sir William.

Sir Arscott Ourry Molesworth did not neglect the tradition of his race, that the marriages of the family should bring new vigour to the Molesworth stock. His wife was a Scottish lady descended from the Hume family, of which David Hume, the historian, was the most brilliant ornament. Our Sir William always took a special pleasure in this connection, and referred to it with well-founded pride when the freedom of the city of Edinburgh was conferred on him in 1854, the year before his death. Sir William's mother brought to the family into which she married the inheritance of beauty as well as that of mental distinction. She was the daughter of a celebrated Edinburgh beauty, "Betsy Hume." The story is that the beautiful Betsy Hume was engaged to her cousin, Sir Alexander Kinloch, but in spite of this was besieged by another assiduous lover, Captain Brown, who toasted her at every supper party in Edinburgh. When asked how long and how often he would

do this, he replied, "I shall toast her till I make her Brown." Such importunity did not remain unrequited. Sir Alexander Kinloch was gathered to his fathers before he had led his bride to the altar ; the beautiful Betsy Hume became the beautiful Betsy Brown and mother of the lady who married Sir Arscott Ourry Molesworth and in course of time grandmother of the subject of these pages, who was born in London on 23rd May 1810.

The Molesworths were a short-lived family ; in the eighteenth century baronet succeeded baronet at short intervals. But the Scotch marriage of Sir Arscott Ourry Molesworth brought into the family a strain of much stronger physical vitality. The mother of Sir William Molesworth had a physical constitution which prolonged her life in unimpaired vigour to extreme old age ; she had also the moral qualities of self-reliance, sound judgment, and unbending determination characteristic of her country ; and these made her first a competent guardian, and to the end of his life the trusted friend and confidante of her son. He inherited many of his mental qualities from his mother : in her splendid physical constitution he had unhappily no share. His father, Sir Arscott Ourry Molesworth (of whom Pencarrow boasts a splendid full-length portrait by Raeburn), died at the age of thirty-two, on 26th December 1823,



Sir Arscott Curry Molesworth, Bart.

leaving five children, three sons and two daughters.¹ William Molesworth was thus left, at the age of thirteen years, the eighth baronet of his line, the head of an ancient family, the owner of great estates,² in possession of mental vigour far beyond his years and an extremely delicate physical constitution : a perilous conjunction notwithstanding all that an able and conscientious mother could do to reduce its dangers.

The state of his health rendered the discipline which a public school would have afforded entirely out of the question. He was indeed entered for Eton, but it was impossible for him to go there. In 1824, shortly after his father's death, Lady Molesworth consulted some of the leading physicians of the day on the possibility of letting him go to Eton. The verdict was, "You might as well hang him up at the Cross of Edinburgh." Fragile health was a burden which he carried with him from the cradle to the grave. But his exceptional mental capacity manifested itself also from his earliest years. When he was hardly more than a baby his sister's governess gave him some of her sums to work out, thinking to distract the mind of the ailing child from his physical sufferings ; he quickly showed his innate interest in study and

¹ William, born 1810, died 1855 ; Elizabeth, born 1812, died 1836 ; Arscott Ourry, born 1814, died 1842 ; Mary, born 1816, still living ; Francis Alexander, born 1818, died 1846.

² Tetcott in Devonshire, and Pencarrow in Cornwall.

a natural capacity for arithmetic, mathematics and scientific pursuits. He spent a short time in a preparatory school at Putney; but he was too weakly to join in the games of the other boys and was thus thrown more than ever upon his books and his own thoughts. His mother probably did the best that could have been done under the circumstances; in 1824, when he was fourteen, she went to live in Edinburgh, taking him and her other children with her.

Another Cornishman, destined like Molesworth to play a brief but distinguished part in political life, had received part of his education in Edinburgh, only just escaping being a contemporary of Sir William Molesworth there. Charles Buller had been placed by his parents in Edinburgh, with Thomas Carlyle as his private tutor, in the years 1822-23. Carlyle described Charles Buller with unusual urbanity as "a most manageable, cheery and altogether welcome and intelligible phenomenon: quite a bit of sunshine in my dreary Edinburgh element"; and again, at the time of Buller's death, Carlyle wrote of him in the *Examiner*: "A sound, penetrating intellect, full of adroit resources, and loyal by nature itself to all that was methodic, manful, true." There is no evidence that Lady Molesworth was influenced by the Bullers to bring her son to Edinburgh. Her own Scottish connections and her appreciation of

Scottish university education afford a sufficient reason for her choice. Sir William joined many of the university classes ; he also studied modern languages in Edinburgh under first-rate professors, and became a good Italian and French scholar and gained a fair acquaintance with German ; at a later period, a year's residence in Germany and an industrious course of study of German philosophy and metaphysics gave him a complete command of the language at a time when it was very little known in this country. During his residence in Edinburgh, boy as he was, he was a great deal noticed by many of the most distinguished men there, among whom he would sometimes mention in later life Sir Walter Scott, Sir William Hamilton, Jeffrey and the Professors Brewster, Leslie, Jamieson, Hope, etc. His Italian master in Edinburgh was a Signor Demarchi,¹ a superior and able man who had been driven from his own country as a political refugee. Young Molesworth became not only his pupil but his friend, and this friendship strengthened the ardent opposition to political despotism which was so marked in Molesworth's after-life. He attached great importance himself to the bias given to his mind by the education he received in Edinburgh. His taste for science was manifested in the usual boyish way : he made himself a chemical laboratory

¹ In 1821 this gentleman became Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department in Piedmont.

and burnt holes in his sister's frocks and nearly poisoned himself by inhaling chlorine gas. At this early period of his life his family gave him the nickname of "the philosopher," which remained with him through life and the remembrance of which is perpetuated in the name of the "Philosophic Radicals," the political party with which he was identified on his first entrance into Parliament. More unusual than his chemical experiments was the passion he showed at a very early age for making libraries. Before he was fifteen, all his spare money was spent on books: and the love of books continued to the end of his life. Pencarrow contains three complete libraries, affording unmistakable evidence of what Sir William's tastes were, just as the three perfect cock-pits in the grounds immediately surrounding the house are indicative of the tastes of his ancestors. By his last will his libraries were strictly entailed; no book forming part of them may be taken away from the house. While he was still very young he made great progress in his favourite study of mathematics, and it is said that before he left Edinburgh he had mastered the whole of Laplace's *Mécanique Céleste*.

Lady Molesworth, writing to Lord Erskine, British Minister in Munich in 1828, described her son as having been from his infancy "more man than boy." It is rather consolatory, however, to



Waller & Co. del. ph. sc.

Mary, Lady Molesworth.

see that "the boy" gained the upper hand of "the man" from time to time, as for instance in 1824, when he writes to his mother for his "Italian grammar, likewise my fishing-rod," and adds, "If there is any fishing-*tacle* (*sic*), tell Cleve to bring it." Throughout life his spelling was most erratic, and in his letters on all sorts of learned subjects we come across many words in an orthography all his own. Correct spelling was still perhaps considered a more fitting accomplishment for an attorney's clerk than for a gentleman.

It was the one serious mistake which his mother made about his education, that when he was seventeen, on the advice of his uncle, Rev. W. Molesworth, rector of St. Breoke, Wadebridge, she entered him as an undergraduate of St. John's College, Cambridge. At Edinburgh he had been the friend and companion of its most eminent men at a time when it was the centre of the intellectual activity of the North: Cambridge at that date was sunk in sloth and routine. He who was already an advanced mathematician was put into a class that was grappling, not too successfully, with the first book of Euclid; "an *ennui*," he says, "which I would not support for the fabled treasures of Cræsus." The friend of Sir Walter Scott, Sir William Hamilton, etc., grumbled loud and long against the *statu pupillari* of the Cambridge of 1827. He did not feel that Cambridge was

teaching him anything; moreover, he did not consider himself treated like a gentleman. He especially declaimed against his own college. "They are not gentlemen," he writes to his mother of his pastors and masters, "nor do they in general possess the manners of gentlemen. . . . I have now quarrelled with my tutor, Gwatkin, who did not certainly treat me in a gentlemanly manner. I have told them that I intend to leave my college for Trinity as soon as possible. . . . If I was to remain at St. John's, I should be without doubt miserable." The migration to Trinity was therefore accomplished without delay. Sir William Molesworth was in good company in his complaints of the Cambridge of his day. Almost at the same time Charles Darwin and Alfred Tennyson were at the University, and their feeling towards her was very similar to Molesworth's. Tennyson expressed his feelings in a sonnet, printed in the present Lord Tennyson's *Life of his father*, vol. i. p. 67, vigorously denouncing the University. The concluding lines are—

You that do profess to teach
And teach us nothing, feeding not the heart.

Some indication of the impression Molesworth made upon his contemporaries at Cambridge may be gathered from a slight satirical sketch, accompanied by a portrait, both probably contributed by

Thackeray to "The Maclise Portrait Gallery," which originally appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* between 1830 and 1838. Thackeray was Molesworth's junior at Trinity only by one year, and was his intimate friend in later life. The sketch represents "our great statesman" in his closet meditating on "cosmogony, or the state of human affairs," and gorgeously arrayed in damask dressing-gown and embroidered Grecian cap. His various accomplishments are thus described: "Not political [studies] alone engage his mind; he is a profound metaphysician; as a linguist, stupendous; as a mathematician, he has attained a depth which is more easily imagined than described. Sir Isaac Newton once said in our hearing, when Sir William, as a lad, came up to Trinity, 'Dash my wig, Mr. Yorke! that young man beats me all to shivers.' We speak within compass when we say that Sir William reads you off a page of Chinese with great ease and the true Peking accent . . . we have even heard that he not only admires, but understands, Jeremy Bentham. Our artist remarked nothing further . . . except that on his entrance Sir William was occupied reading an enormous folio of French mathematics, and that by the honourable baronet's side lay the ashes of four-and-twenty cigars. Trifling particulars; but interesting to those who love to penetrate into human character, and are eager to know the

smallest circumstances relating to good or great men." Most readers will agree that this is unmistakable "Michael Angelo Titmarsh." It bears his mark and so does the sketch. Both are characteristic of the good-humoured chaff with which one young man often regards the accomplishments of another.

Sir William's principal amusement at Cambridge was hunting ; his poor health did not prevent him from being a hard rider. Pencarrow is not in a good hunting country ; but Tetcott, the other estate, is, and during Sir William's minority the covers there used to be drawn by the famous hunting parson, the Rev. "Jack" Russell. Sir William, therefore, had great traditions to live up to in the hunting-field when he came to Cambridge, and he seems to have been worthy of them. On one occasion he rode for fifty miles after a fall in which he had broken his collar-bone. On another, he considered his life was saved by his friend Mr. Duppa, who came to his assistance at a critical moment when all the rest of the field had passed him by. This was the beginning of a long friendship which had many consequences.

At Cambridge and throughout nearly the whole of his life when he was away from home, it was his habit to write fully and frequently to his mother and sisters of everything he was doing. In a charming boyish letter to Lady Molesworth he

tells her of his long runs and hairbreadth escapes and concludes : “ If you do not wish me to have my neck broken you must consent to let me have good hunters, for not to hunt is out of the question.”

In April 1828, when Sir William had been less than a year at Cambridge, his friend Duppa got into trouble with the college authorities in connection with some gambling scrape. Sir William took up his friend's cause with all the ardour of his nature, and probably made no secret of the sentiments with which Cambridge education and Cambridge dons had inspired him. In this quarrel he quickly exchanged the place of second for principal, with what seems now the absurd result that he sent a challenge to fight a duel to his college tutor, Mr. Henry Barnard. The first effect of this was that on 30th April 1828 he and Mr. Barnard were bound over by the Mayor of Cambridge to keep the peace for twelve months ; the second that Molesworth was expelled from Cambridge ; the third that his mother determined to continue his education in Germany, her kind old friend, General Sir Joseph Straton,¹ acting as her son's guide, philosopher and friend.

¹ Sir Joseph Straton was a distinguished officer. During his active military career he was known as Joseph Muter. He changed his name to Straton in 1816 on succeeding to some property. He served through three campaigns in the Peninsula. In 1813 he was nominated to a Lieut.-Colonelcy in the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons and was promoted Colonel in

During the twelve months in which the antagonists had been bound over to keep the peace, the laws of England prevented a hostile meeting; at the very hour when the twelve months had expired, the laws of "honour" demanded that they should try to kill each other. Therefore, on the 1st May 1829, Mr. Henry Barnard and Sir William Molesworth "met" at Calais and exchanged shots, without, however, doing each other any harm.

Sir William wrote on the following day to his mother :—

I am happy to inform you I am alive and well. . . . The distance from Munich to Calais is above 700 miles, and took me thirteen days all alone with my servant; nothing but an affair would ever induce me to take such a journey alone. . . . I agree with him [General Straton] in being most highly satisfied with your conduct throughout the affair.

There are several points in this note that help us to measure the distance between 1829 and 1901—the days before railways are made visible to us: thirteen days' hard travelling between Munich and Calais; we also perceive more clearly the stringency of the code of honour that made it necessary for a boy of nineteen to undertake such a journey

1814. He commanded the Inniskillings at Waterloo until the fall of Major-General Sir William Ponsonby, when the command of the Union Brigade devolved upon him. He was wounded at the close of the battle. He died in October 1840.

in order to shoot at his former tutor ; and we can afford a smile at the lordly way in which he acquaints his mother that he was pleased to be satisfied with her conduct throughout the affair. The servant referred to in the foregoing letter was MacLean, a Highlander, who was devoted to his master, and remained with Sir William from his boyhood to the end of his life. The duel that ended so harmlessly might have resulted in an awful tragedy. MacLean told Lady Molesworth that he went to the " affair " with a loaded pistol in his pocket, and if Barnard had killed his master, MacLean had determined to murder Barnard.

Lady Molesworth's conduct in relation to the duel was shortly this : during the twelve months' compulsory peace between the antagonists, in December 1828, Lady Molesworth received a letter from the aunt of Mr. Henry Barnard, appealing to her to take steps to prevent the duel by giving information to the police of Calais, who, if duly warned, would arrest the principals on their arrival. The poor lady begins her letter by saying : " As a female, I may be excused the anxiety it causes me ; and as a Christian, I am bound to take any steps I can to prevent a duel." Lady Molesworth in reply played the part of a Roman matron. She sympathised with her correspondent's feelings as an aunt, and hinted that her own as a mother were not less acute ; but she added that there was only

one way in which the duel could be averted, and that one way would be for Mr. Henry Barnard to apologise: "I feel whatever influence I might possess over my son, I never could exercise it until such took place, for although his mother and a woman, I never could advise what hereafter might be deem'd injurious to his honour. It now rests entirely with your nephew's friends," etc. No wonder the young fellow was pleased when he knew what his mother had written. Twice in later life, in 1836 and 1837, Sir William came very near to fighting duels. The more interesting of these occasions was that in 1837, when he was called to account by Sir Hudson Lowe for having alluded to him in the House of Commons as "the gaoler of St. Helena." Seconds were appointed, but through their efforts no actual encounter took place. Sir Hudson Lowe was pacified by the assurance that the expression complained of only referred to the office he had held, and not to himself personally.

At the time of the duel with Mr. Barnard, Sir William was abroad, and it was not till later that he knew that his mother's conduct had been so exactly attuned to his own. He had left England for Germany shortly after his departure from Cambridge, accompanied by General Sir Joseph Straton and Major Mitchell and attended by his faithful MacLean. A quarrel very soon

arose between Major Mitchell and his young companion ; the Major thought himself slighted by Molesworth's absorption in a German dictionary when he ought to have been listening to the Major's conversation. The quarrel had no importance in itself, but it must be confessed that it is significant of a tendency in Sir William's character. He said himself that he had often quarrelled with his best friends, and that he felt it was his destiny continually to be in hot water. On this particular occasion, he seemed to have acted very well. He frankly and fully apologised to Major Mitchell for not appearing interested in his conversation. But wounds to vanity are hard to heal ; the Major would not be pacified, notwithstanding all that General Straton and the younger man could do. The General and Sir William wrote to Lady Molesworth lengthy histories of the dispute, and have to confess that they have failed to conciliate their former companion. "The Major," wrote General Straton, "is, I am persuaded, an excellent man, but so very sensitive, etc.," that he made a very uncomfortable travelling companion. It should be added that General Straton was and continued to be till the end of his life on the most cordial and affectionate terms with the young man. The General accompanied him to Frankfort, Offenbach and Munich. From Frankfort Molesworth wrote to his eldest sister, Elizabeth, that wherever

they go in society he is quite put into the shade by the popularity of "M. le général." For almost the first time in his life he discovers at eighteen that he is a boy ; however, he adds, "when the General is out of the way his aide-de-camp may be talked to." After a short stay in Frankfort, they went on to Offenbach, where Sir William domiciled himself in the family of Dr. Becker for two months in order to study German and philosophy. He discovers by personal experiment the social enormity which a youngster commits who takes a seat on a sofa in a German parlour, and makes fun in his letters home of the little German States where you could hardly take a walk without crossing and recrossing the frontier several times. In the spirit of a true John Bull, he writes plaintively in November : "No fires, only stoves in this cursed country." His devotion to tobacco had already manifested itself, and he was arrested as a smuggler at one of the frontiers on account of a small quantity he was carrying in his pocket and fined about 2d. General Straton recommended that Sir William should make a long stay in Munich, where he had introductions to the British Minister, Lord Erskine. Before taking leaving of his charge the General wrote to Lady Molesworth, October 1828 :—

I have great satisfaction in telling you that Sir William's conduct has been in every respect most proper,

steady and gentlemanlike. . . . He gave in to no nonsense and kept his room a great deal, pursuing his studies. Every one played more or less, but Sir William never did, even for the smallest stake. He evinced no turn for any species of dissipation, was always most ready to receive and follow advice, and during the time we were together, he never caused to me the least inquietude.

Lord Erskine and his family received Sir William in Munich with every hospitality and kindness. They would fain have had him make his home in the British Embassy; this offer, however, he firmly but gratefully declined. Lord Erskine presented him to the King of Bavaria and to all the most fashionable society in Munich. A new world opened before him: a world in which every other accomplishment sank into insignificance in comparison with dancing. He writes to his mother: "Dancing appears to be the sole occupation, and the centre of attraction is placed in the heels"; and again, later: "A good dancer is looked upon as a Deity and a bad one is esteemed amongst the d—d." In a letter to his sister Elizabeth he says: "The ballroom presents an appearance more like the betting ring at Newmarket than anything I am acquainted with," and he describes the eagerness with which the gentlemen seek to secure the best partners and buzz round a lady to ascertain if she is free for the nine hundred and ninety-ninth waltz. With the thoroughness

characteristic of him he set himself to learn to dance as conscientiously and thoroughly as he studied metaphysics and mathematics. His life at Munich was well filled. German philosophy in the morning ; fencing, sledging, dancing and the theatre in the later hours of the day. One thing astonished him considerably. He had gone to Munich mainly with the view of making himself familiar with German, but all fashionable Munich spoke French. "It is a nuisance," he wrote to his mother, in February 1829, "that in society here hardly a single word of German is spoken. The natives almost always speak to each other in French, and many openly declare that they prefer it to their own language, and if you address them in German they always reply in French." The predominance of France in politics was as marked as it was in social intercourse. No one can read of either in the early part of the century without feeling how much the whole of Europe was within the shadow of the French Revolution and of Napoleon.

Sir William's letters home, written from Germany, give a humorous description of MacLean's primitive methods of "shopping" in a German town. If he saw what he wanted, he went up to it and took it ; if he could not see what he wanted he proceeded "cooly" (*sic*) to open and hunt through all the drawers till he found it. In a later letter, however, we find MacLean in search of a more

excellent way. Sir William writes to his mother soon after his arrival in Munich : “ At this moment, such is the force of example, I hear MacLean reading his German lessons with his master in the adjacent apartment.” MacLean’s enthusiasm for the German language was probably of parasitic growth and was really growing on the root of his affection for his master. Sir William might very well have said at any time of his life, not only, “ Love me, love my dog,” but “ Love me, love metaphysics, love everything that I love.” Every one who was with him had to be interested in the things that interested him, whether it was German metaphysics, tree-planting, or dogs and horses. He tried to impart his own interest in metaphysics to Charles Mathews, the actor. Writing to congratulate him on going on the stage, in 1835, he says :—

I suppose you will soon forget all the valuable metaphysical knowledge that I attempted to cram you with, and in amusing the external world you will hardly agree in doubting its existence, but be persuaded there is an unknown something which laughs at your jokes and enjoys your humour.

Thackeray was wont to laugh at Sir William’s keenness to impart, as well as to acquire knowledge. One of the Pencarrow possessions is a caricature by Thackeray, with the house in the background labelled, “ The Pencarrow Academy ” ; Sir

William is the schoolmaster, whip in hand ; before him stand a group of his friends who represent the scholars ; they are in attitudes varying from timidity to defiance. Charles Buller is humble ; “Greek” Trelawney is defiant ; John Temple Leader, a diminutive figure, is on the dunce’s stool with a large fool’s cap on his head.¹

Another small example of the same quality may be mentioned. Sir William, as a young man, became possessed of the conviction that his handwriting was not all that could be desired. His spelling does not seem to have disturbed him. A writing-master was immediately engaged, and not only Sir William, but his brothers and sisters were pressed into the class ; their handwriting was condemned as a scrawl, and the group of grown-up young men and women set to work to improve their caligraphy. The scrawl was improved out of existence, and a neat, firm handwriting substituted. Mr. Arscott Ourry Molesworth, however, maintained his scrawl unimpaired, in spite of the writing-master. Perhaps he did not wish to be improved. Again, later in life, after he had been four years in Parliament, Sir William put himself

¹ Mr. Temple Leader is now (1901) the only survivor of the group. He has lived for many years at Vincigliata near Florence. Edward John Trelawney, whom his friends called “Greek” Trelawney, was the intimate friend of Shelley and Byron. It was he who recovered Shelley’s body and was present when it was burned on the sea-shore at Via Reggio in 1822. His portrait as an old man is an interesting feature in Millais’s well-known picture, “The North-West Passage.”



ENCARRO W. JOURNAL
for young & old

W. JOURNAL

W. JOURNAL

W. JOURNAL

under an elocution-master, in order that the style and delivery of his speeches might be made better. He had very strongly developed the desire to do well whatever he undertook to do at all. As his mother wrote when she introduced him to Lord Erskine at Munich: "He has a natural desire to improve himself . . . he is aspiring and would think no fatigue too great to attain his object."

He shared in and thoroughly enjoyed the social gaieties of Munich. The last great festivity in which he took part was a costume ball given by the Electress. He wrote home: "The public chose to affirm that I had the most splendid costume in the room." The pleasant life in Munich was cut short by the necessity, under which he conceived himself to lie, to travel to Calais to fight Mr. Barnard.

The duel well over, he went home for a short visit, and consequently there is a break in the supply of family letters. He resumed his European tour, however, in the autumn of the same year, and the lively letters to his mother and sisters begin again. A letter dated Rome, 23rd December 1829, tells Lady Molesworth of his vicissitudes in reaching the Eternal City: how his travelling carriage stuck in a mud-hole and was with difficulty extricated, etc. Once established in Rome he divided his time between studies and amusements of the same kind as those which had occupied him

in Munich. He described his living room as a jumble of spurs, whips, fencing-foils, meerschauts, palettes, paint-boxes, portfolios, masks and carnival-costumes, while the bookshelves were filled with Kant and the Koran, Dante and Macchiavelli. At this period of his life he felt strongly attracted towards Eastern travel and began to make a study of Arabic and other Oriental languages. He worked diligently every day, with a "master with a long beard, from Chaldea." His interest in study made him an unusual phenomenon among the other young Englishmen in Rome. "I have three masters," he wrote, "and intend to have a fourth"; he goes to "gay, very gay," parties every night; but he assures his mother solemnly that his hours are very regular, "to bed at three and rise again at nine." He took a leading part in promoting a fancy dress ball which was held in the carnival of 1830, at which he appeared in the character of Ivanhoe. His mother and sisters came out and joined him in Rome, and they remained in Italy visiting Naples, Castellamare, Bologna, etc., during the whole of the year 1830. In February 1831 he was travelling homewards to keep his majority in May of that year. After a tempestuous voyage from Calais, lasting twelve hours, he landed once more in England, 29th March 1831.

He was now on the verge of a man's life and a man's work. Childish things were to be put away

and a good many things that were not childish. As he described a year or two later in a letter to his sister Elizabeth, his political duties henceforth absorbed all his strength :—

They are no sinecure ; they engross my thoughts by day and torment my sleeping hours. There is not one amusement I have partaken of, there is hardly one study I am fond of that I can find time to pursue ; all my reading must now be (nearly) devoted to one end. I do not in any way complain, for this is the service I offered to perform in return for the honor confer'd.

He was entering political life in a period of storm and stress, and his was not a character at any time that could be satisfied by placidly floating with the stream. His strength was therefore destined to be put to the test at the very outset of his public life.

CHAPTER II

ENTRANCE INTO POLITICAL LIFE

THE England to which Sir William Molesworth returned in 1831 was a world where "nothing was talked of, thought of, dreamt of" but the Reform Bill. Everybody was deep in politics; everybody was either for or against the Reform Bill: with this possible exception, that some members of Lord Grey's Government were of very doubtful loyalty to its leading principles. According to Greville, Lord Melbourne, the Home Secretary, could not see how the Government could be carried on without the rotten boroughs. But treachery, real or supposed, within the Cabinet only heightened the excitement in the country. There were riots in London, Bristol, Derby, Nottingham and Edinburgh. Queen Adelaide, who was supposed to be influencing the King against the Bill, was so unpopular that she was mobbed as she drove out in her carriage; the Queen's Theatre changed its name and the

Adelaide omnibuses pasted sheets of paper over "the hated letters."¹ Another object of popular indignation, and for the same reason, was the Duke of Wellington. A tumultuous crowd surged round Apsley House and could only be dispersed by the firing of a gun over their heads. It was a time when even the best and coolest brains in England thought that the country was on the verge of a revolution. If the King had not been brought to consent to the creation of Peers sufficient to carry the Reform Bill in the House of Lords, and if under this threat the Peers had not given way, there is little doubt that the Reform refused by constitutional means would have been accomplished by revolution with consequences which none could foretell. It is difficult, unless we go back to the letters and memoirs written at the time, to realise the intense excitement which prevailed; some minds were filled with dread of what they believed to be the almost certainly impending revolution; others exulted in the very same prospect, and believed that an English revolution would form a fitting second volume to the French Revolution, then fresh in the memory of many.

It was to this England that Sir William returned on the eve of his majority in March 1831. Ardent and enthusiastic in everything, a keen advocate of the principles of the Reform Bill, he

¹ *Life of Francis Place*, by Graham Wallas, p. 297.

could not come within the circuit of the great flame of feeling in England without taking light from it, and without also throwing his brand into the conflagration. He immediately identified himself with the popular feeling for Reform. Mrs. Grote wrote: "He disliked aristocratic institutions, detested ecclesiastical government, felt earnestly the injustice and wrong under which the bulk of the English people suffered, and longed to assist in bringing about a healthier and more just scheme of domestic administration." It was nothing to him that the Reform Bill proposed to extinguish the large number of rotten boroughs in his native county, for some of which his forefathers had sat in Parliament. His friend Charles Buller, who was in the unreformed Parliament in 1830-32, as member for Looe, voted in 1831 for the extinction of his own borough. Molesworth would have done the same in the same circumstances. His political conduct was never influenced by personal considerations, and he heartily supported Lord Grey's declaration that representation and not nomination should be the principle of the reformed House of Commons. The Reform Bill of 1831 proposed to extinguish 60 rotten boroughs and to deprive 168 boroughs of their members. Within a few days of Sir William's return to England, 23rd March 1831, this Bill, amid a scene of unparalleled excitement,

passed its second reading in the House of Commons by a majority of 1 only, the numbers being 302 to 303. Macaulay took part in the debate and division and wrote a description of the scene to his friend Ellis. He said that the memory of it would remain fresh and sharp in his mind after fifty years, but it is perhaps fortunate for us that he wrote his vivid account within a week of the event. "It was like," he wrote,¹ "seeing Cæsar stabbed in the Senate House or seeing Oliver take the mace from the table ; a sight to be seen only once and never to be forgotten." He describes the frenzied excitement in the House of Commons as the numbers of the division were read out ; how men laughed and cried and shouted and shook hands and clapped each other on the back, and ran huzzaing through the lobbies down into the crowd which had waited up all night till four in the morning to hear the result of the division ; how the cabmen shouted to the senators, "Is the Bill carried, sir ?" and on receiving the answer "Yes, by one," cried "Thank God for it !"

Those who have seen their phlegmatic countrymen similarly moved by political excitement can easily reproduce the scene and conjure up the emotions which produced it.

A majority of 1 on the second reading was quickly followed by defeat in Committee, and the

¹ Trevelyan's *Life of Lord Macaulay*, vol. i. p. 201.

Ministers instantly resolved on a dissolution of Parliament. The decision was come to suddenly, and the King's consent was hurriedly obtained. The move was so rapid that there was no time to fetch the state coach and the cream-coloured horses. The King is said to have declared his readiness to go down to Westminster, if needs were, in a hackney cab. A messenger was sent post-haste to the Tower to fetch the crown and to gather together such attendants as could be found to wait upon His Majesty. In the midst of a violent anti-reform speech by Peel in the House of Commons the guns were heard announcing the arrival of the King. At each explosion there was a tumultuous cheer from the ranks of the Government, and Peel was still speaking, in the midst of every kind of uproar, when Black Rod was heard knocking at the door to summon the Commons to the House of Lords. There the proceedings were still more violent and outrageous; those who were present told Greville that it was like the scene of the Oath of the Tennis Court, and the whole proceedings seemed exactly like the preparatory days of a revolution. In the robing room the King, who had not then been crowned, insisted on wearing the crown and on placing it himself upon his head. George Villiers told Greville that he had never beheld such a scene as the one he looked on that day in the House

of Lords, when he saw the King on the throne, with the crown askew upon his head, and the tall grim figure of Lord Grey by his side with the sword of state in his hand. It seemed to Villiers to picture forthcoming events and to be a premonition of revolution and the execution of the King.¹

The writs for the new Parliament were issued in April 1831, too soon for Sir William Molesworth to offer himself as a candidate, for he did not attain his majority till 23rd May of the same year. But he had no sooner reached Cornwall than he made his sympathy with the Reform movement known, and he was almost immediately invited to stand for East Cornwall in the following year in the event of the Reform Bill passing. He consented, and wrote at once to his mother, who was still in Italy, "to come home as soon as you can and enjoy the sport." In a later letter he told her of the strong feeling for reform among the voters of East Cornwall. "In the present state of excitement," he said, "half measures are of no avail. Aristocrat or Liberal, I am confident if I were of the other party" [*i.e.* opposed to reform] "I could not command a single vote amongst my tenantry; however, we are now hand and glove." He, and his friends on his behalf, made a thorough canvass of the constituency and were assured that

¹ *Greville Memoirs*, vol. ii. pp. 138-141.



Sir George Hayler, pinx.

Walker & Gocherell, ph. sc.

Sir William Moxworth, Bart. M.P.
at the age of 22.

he could count on a big majority. He must have been a very strong candidate. His hereditary connection with the constituency gave him an advantage from the outset. His style of speaking marked the man: impassioned to the point of imprudence and often beyond it, but not frothy; he always knew his facts well and never spoke but on a solid substructure of study and reflection. In the words of a near relative, "an undercurrent of energy and action flowed deep and strong beneath a delicate and aristocratic person, which in no wise displeased the masses, ever glad to be led by a gentleman."¹ His address to the electors was issued in June 1832. It is short and to the point. It proclaimed him to be an out-and-out Reformer. He promised to support "every species of just and salutary Reform in Church and State." He advocated National Education, the abandonment of the taxes on newspapers, and the abolition of Slavery, and he pledged himself to give a discriminating support to Lord Grey's Government. "I will support them," he said, "as long as they shall persevere in their present honest and enlightened policy." He probably had a premonition that his future relations with the Whig Government would not be characterised by un-

¹ From an unpublished sketch written by Sir William Molesworth's brother-in-law, Mr. Richard Ford, author of the well-known *Handbook of Spain*.

broken cordiality. His friend Charles Buller had been in the House of Commons for two years before the passing of the Reform Bill. All that Buller had learned during those two years of the ways and doings of the Whigs was probably at his friend's disposal; and according to Buller the Whigs of his day were "a heartless, spiritless canaille," an opinion which Molesworth very soon shared and corroborated from his own experience. In the first few years of his House of Commons life he very seldom refers to the Whigs in home letters, or in other familiar correspondence, without some such ejaculation as "miserable brutes," or "slippery dogs," or others even less parliamentary. The fight between him and the Whigs was of the sort that is always going on between the enthusiastic advocates for reform working on first principles, and hand-to-mouth politicians who will do nothing that they are not absolutely compelled to do by fear of losing power and place.

In the General Election of 1832 Sir William Molesworth was returned unopposed for the constituency of East Cornwall, his colleague being Mr. William Salusbury Trelawney.¹ His friend Charles Buller was returned at the same

¹ It was Sir William's intention, if his ambition to sit in Parliament had been thwarted, to carry out the scheme of Eastern travel which had so strongly attracted him during his residence in Rome.

time for the constituency of Liskeard, which he represented till his death.

A firm political and personal friendship was established between Molesworth and Buller, tempered occasionally but never seriously interrupted by Molesworth's fears that Buller was



SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH, AGED 12.

growing "Whiggish," and by Buller's efforts to moderate the ardour of Molesworth's onslaught on Whigs in general. Particular Whigs, such as the Whigs in Cornwall or the Whigs in office, Buller was willing to throw to the wolves, but from time to time he checked Molesworth's disposition to make public attacks on all Whigs, lock, stock and barrel.

On his establishment in London, in 1833, for the first session of the Reformed Parliament, Molesworth quickly showed the temper that was to characterise his political life by voting against the Government of which he was a nominal supporter. He voted against them twice on amendments to the Address, and writes to his mother: "The debate, thank God, will finish to-night and you will find my name in another minority." The occasion of his opposition was the proposal to bring in a new Coercion Bill for Ireland, and he writes fervently:—

I will oppose this infernal Bill engendered in Hell [*i.e.* the House of Lords] to the last. . . . Ever yours on this subject most unhappy ; on all other ones, so-so.

WILLIAM MOLESWORTH.

Though he so ardently opposed coercion in Ireland, he never supported the Repeal movement. He said of himself that he was a Radical, not a Revolutionist ; he would never allow himself to be called a follower of Cobbett or O'Connell or any one else. "I will vote with them," he would say, "when to the best of my judgment they are right."

He was very sensitive to the awe-inspiring qualities of the House of Commons, and wrote home that "it takes immense courage to rise in the House ;" he says he intends to break the ice by making short speeches on presenting petitions,

taking the opportunity of doing so when "attention is slack and no one listens, which is an immense advantage for us timid and incipient orators." Describing one of these occasions he told his sister Elizabeth that he was so alarmed he could hardly stand. He discovers, however, that "provided you do not call the Speaker a blackguard or the members of the House six hundred rascals, you can say what you like." It strikes one that there were very few places where Sir William did not say what he liked. Early in the session of 1833 he attended a Parliamentary dinner given by Lord John Russell and was pleased to find that at least half of his fellow-guests had opposed the Irish Bill. Molesworth argued with Lord John in defence of the Ballot and other Radical measures which "Finality John" had not then seen his way to support.

Molesworth's Tory uncle in Cornwall, who had taken a natural pride in the compliment paid to his nephew in being returned unopposed for East Cornwall, soon began to exhibit signs of uneasiness at the votes the young member was giving against the Government, and the way in which he was identifying himself with what was then considered extreme Radicalism. The Rev. William Molesworth wrote to his nephew and namesake that his conduct was causing grave dissatisfaction in the constituency and that he was

seriously imperilling his seat. The younger man replied with a long letter (Feb. 1833) in his own defence, and showed the courage and determination which never throughout his Parliamentary life failed him on similar occasions. He asked his uncle to inform any of his constituents who might complain of the votes he was giving that—

I consider myself a trustee, and that I am to execute my trust to the best of my abilities and judgment. The moment the majority of my constituents consider my opinions to be different from theirs, the moment they wish me to resign, they need not fear lest I should insist on the septennial lease which I am afraid the present Parliament will not shorten.

His sister Elizabeth was both in politics and other subjects completely in sympathy with him. She drew an amusing picture of the Tory uncle perambulating the county defending the two Radical votes of the new member; but the complaining constituents, at this time at any rate, appear to have been more imaginary than real, and Sir William felt rather aggrieved that he had been drawn into writing a long argumentative letter, when “a few words would have sufficed for him, as I know his inaccessibility to argument.” “Crabbèd age and youth cannot live together,” especially when age is a Tory clergyman and youth is a Radical M.P., but notwithstanding

some coolness between the two there was never a positive break in their friendly relations.

The whole tendency of Sir William Molesworth's mind made him a Reformer, and his education had only strengthened his natural disposition. Scotch and German metaphysics made him a liberal thinker in the realm of theology as well as in that of politics. The opportunity he had had of seeing several of the small courts of Germany and Italy made him a Liberal in European politics. The Rev. William Molesworth in his Cornish rectory was not able to exercise any authority of a kind calculated to counteract all these influences, even if they had not been reinforced, as they now were, by the society in which Sir William mixed in London. Accounts of him at this period of his life agree in describing him as singularly attractive in appearance and manners. General Straton wrote to Lady Molesworth a short letter of congratulation on the favourable impression he had created in his first session :—

From members of all parties I hear, though of course politics differ, a most favourable account of William's talents. . . . I may congratulate you on his being a rising and promising young man. . . . He is in capital health . . . and really is a handsome young man with exceedingly good air and manners.

In a later letter General Straton again expressed

to Lady Molesworth the same favourable impression :—

I see no frivolity or silly vanity about him, and, as to his political start, a straightforward, independent course is in my mind at least that which bids fairest for fame.

Mrs. Grote describes him at the same period as being surprisingly accomplished for his age, and speaks of the animation of his countenance lending a singular charm to his whole appearance. More weighty perhaps than either of the two witnesses just quoted is the testimony of Carlyle to the same effect. In a letter to his mother (30th May 1834) he wrote describing a dinner at the Bullers', at which he had seen various notable persons :—

Radical members and such like . . . [There is a note to this, "No poison in the Radicals. If little apprehension of positive truth, no wilful taking up with falsehood."] among whom a young, very rich man, named Sir William Molesworth, pleased me considerably. We have met since, and shall probably see much more of one another. He seems very honest ; needs, or will need, guidance much, and with it may do not a little good. I liked the frank manners of the young man ; so beautiful in contrast with Scottish gigmanity. I pitied his darkness of mind, and heartily wished him well. He is, among other things, a vehement smoker of tobacco.¹

Whether we pity the darkness of his mind, with Carlyle, or admire his surprising accomplishments,

¹ Froude's *Carlyle*, vol. ii. p. 448.

with Mrs. Grote, it is impossible to read these descriptions without a perception of a very attractive personality, and it is difficult to believe that "a young, very rich man," with the qualities which may be inferred from the foregoing extracts, could not have mixed in any society London afforded. Sir William Molesworth, however, appears on his arrival in London to have conceived the idea that the Radicals of 1832 had to pay for their political triumph in carrying the Reform Bill by social ostracism. He avoided ordinary society. "Nothing," he wrote in 1833, in reference to an invitation to a great house which he had declined, "will induce me to expose myself to the annoyance of mixing with those who hate and fear and would despise us Radicals if they dared." According to his own account he went nowhere as far as ordinary society was concerned. But a more probable reason for "going nowhere" can be discovered in the fact that almost immediately on coming to London he was introduced to the society of the Grotes, Bentham, James and John Mill, etc.; the Bullers he already knew well and was frequently their guest. "Going nowhere" should therefore be interpreted that he went into the society he really enjoyed, rather than into the rush of fashionable gaieties. He was also at this time very frequently a guest in the house of his physician, Dr. Elliotson. In Sir William's letters

home he refers to constant social and professional visits from his doctor. Sometimes the social and professional merge into one another. Dr. Elliotson and he are, he says, "great friends. He came four times to see me when I was ill and would only take one sovereign, as he said he liked to converse with me."

Sir William also made the acquaintance of Lady Byron, and wrote to his sister Elizabeth :—

I like her much ; she is a calm, dignified and certainly very clever person ; expresses herself remarkably well and clearly, rather stern in manners. We got on very well, as she is almost a Radical and we talked on education. You know I like theory but do not care much about practice, and you will laugh at my inspecting several dozen dirty urchins.

His introduction to the Grotes early in his first session soon developed into a warm and intimate friendship. Mrs. Grote has left two accounts of her first meeting with him. According to one of them her husband, George Grote, afterwards the historian of Greece, then the Radical member for the City of London, said to her early in the first session of the Reformed Parliament : "Harriet, there is a young man who sometimes talks to me on our side of the House, of whom I have formed rather a good opinion ; he is a Cornish baronet of the name of Sir William Molesworth and sits for his native county. I should like to bring him

here and introduce him to you.” Soon after, Mr. Grote brought Sir William home to tea, and he made a very favourable impression on both husband and wife. According to the other account, Mrs. Grote’s first introduction to Sir William took place in the lantern of the House of Commons on the 4th February 1833, the day when Grote delivered his maiden speech in favour of the ballot. In the old House of Commons the only place where ladies could hear a debate was a circular opening on the roof, used for purposes of ventilation ; around this some ten or twelve persons might be placed so as to hear, and, to a limited extent, to see, what passed in the House. It was here that Mrs. Grote listened to her husband’s eloquence and breathed the bad air of the House of Commons. She describes in *The Personal Life of George Grote* the great success of his speech, and adds : “ Immediately afterwards a young member joined me upstairs, on the roof of the House ; with a voice half stifled with emotion he poured out his admiration of Grote’s performance, adding that in listening to the speech he had experienced a sort of feeling made up of envy and despair : ‘ For,’ said he, ‘ I am persuaded that I shall never make any approach to Grote’s excellence.’ ” This was William Molesworth, aged twenty-three. Mrs. Grote, like Carlyle, was pleased by the frank manners of the young man.

The two accounts are not inconsistent with one another to any important extent, and the events they record probably happened in sequence, and formed the early stages of an intimate friendship. Grote at that time was, in his wife's stately language, "in the meridian of life, having reached his thirty-eighth year." . . . Sir William, "yet in the flower of his youth and destined soon to become the disciple of his elder colleague, was but slightly indebted to others for the instruction he had acquired. He had laid up, chiefly by private study, no inconsiderable store of learning and scientific knowledge, but, in regard to mental philosophy and political doctrine, he might be said to bring into public life, as it were, a virgin intellect."

The Grotes were perhaps too much inclined to look upon Molesworth as a pupil and disciple, and did not sufficiently allow for the strong native independence of his character. Mrs. Grote refers with evident satisfaction to an incident which shows Sir William entirely in the character of Grote's pupil. There was a division on the subject of the malt-tax, and nearly all the Radical members voted for its abolition: Grote and Molesworth alone of their party voting for its retention. Shortly afterwards the Radicals in the House perceived that they had given an injudicious vote, and one of them asked Molesworth how he had come to

see so clearly what was the wise course. "Well, I did not see it," replied Sir William, ". . . but I saw Grote going out, and I followed him, because I was afraid to vote otherwise than he did ; but I own to you that I did so with fear and trembling." However sweet such homage may have been to Grote from one whose character was frank and independent in no common degree, it was impossible that such blind obedience should last. The younger man was destined to make his own way and take his own line, and the passage from the attitude of unquestioning discipleship to that of resolute independence was not accomplished without strain on the friendship which subsisted between them. No trace of this is, however, to be found in the earlier stages. Molesworth was as ready to give, as the Grotes to receive, unstinted admiration and esteem. In a letter to his mother written on 5th March 1833 he said, describing his life in the House of Commons :—

Grote, the City member, is the person whom I like the most. I frequently drink tea with him. His wife is one of the cleverest women I ever met.

Carlyle has left one of his biting, acid portraits of Grote :

Radical Grote was the only novelty, for I had never noticed him before—a man with a straight upper lip, large chin and open mouth (spout mouth) ; for the rest, a tall

man with dull thoughtful brows and lank dishevelled hair, greatly the look of a prosperous Dissenting minister.”¹

The picture is vivid and explains much, as does also a little note from Charles Buller to Mrs. Austin, describing a second House of Commons speech by Grote on the Ballot in 1835, when his motion was seconded by Molesworth. Buller wrote: “Molesworth’s speech was singular, but the House liked its manliness very much. Grote’s was capital in his cold, correct style.”²

The ardent disciple voting for the continuance of the malt-tax for no other reason than that Grote was doing so, was by January 1837 writing to his mother: “I have declared myself independent of the Grote clique. There is anything but harmony amongst us. In private they agree with me; in public they praise the Whigs,” etc. However, this was the little rift within the lute, and the music of friendship was not silenced until several years later.

was The impression made by young Molesworth on the older Radicals who had fought the great fight which ended in the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832 is evident from a letter from Joseph Parkes to Mrs. Grote, dated 1834, in which he says that in his opinion Molesworth’s was the only “*leading* public mind” which the great Reform movement

¹ Froude’s *Carlyle*, 1834-81, vol. i. p. 144.

² *Three Generations of Englishwomen*, vol. i. p. 90.

had produced in the House of Commons, "that is to say, the only propelling mind there who did not participate in the glorious pull" necessary to pass the Reform Bill. He goes on to speak of the "immense shove" which Molesworth, then about twenty-four years old, had given to the Ballot and other Radical measures, and to his generalship of the Reformers throughout the country. It is a remarkable testimony from a middle-aged man to one who in years was hardly more than a boy.

CHAPTER III

“THE LONDON REVIEW”

MOLESWORTH'S enthusiasm for triennial Parliaments was soon put to a practical test, for Lord Grey's administration of 1832 only lasted two years, and there was another General Election at the end of 1834 and the beginning of 1835. Molesworth was again returned unopposed for East Cornwall. In his second election address he gave a prominent place to his advocacy of Free Trade and of National Education. In his second session, on 3rd June 1834, he had made what was practically his maiden speech in seconding Roebuck's motion on education. He had then urged on the Government the duty of providing suitable education for every child in the United Kingdom ; he also dwelt on the importance of raising the social status of the teaching profession and of not letting it remain what it then was, the refuge of the destitute. With this end in view he pressed

for the establishment of training colleges. The Lancastrian pupil-teacher system he regarded only as a *pis-aller*, and urged the Government to make themselves acquainted with what was being done in France and other European countries to promote national education. Finally, he expressed his firm opinion that popular education should not be placed under the exclusive control of the clergy.

Up to the year 1834 hardly anything had been done by the Government to promote education. In that year a small beginning was made in the form of a Parliamentary grant of £20,000. In the following year an additional grant of £10,000 was made to provide training schools for teachers. But even these small grants met with considerable Parliamentary opposition, and there were M.P.'s who loved to prove, to their own satisfaction, that in those districts where there was least education there was also least crime, desiring the House to infer that ignorance was the parent of innocence. On this temper Molesworth made constant war. Again and again, to his constituents, in the House of Commons and in the country, he urged the importance, nay, the positive duty of making adequate provision for education. But many years passed before his warnings were heeded. As late as 1845 Molesworth pointed out to his constituents that the whole Parliamentary grant for education in the United Kingdom in that year was only

£30,000, or less than a third of what was granted annually by the single State of Massachusetts with a population of less than a million. The annual grants for primary education in the United Kingdom amounted in 1900 to more than £11,000,000, a figure which no one feels to be too great, while it certainly illustrates the absurd inadequacy of the £30,000 which satisfied the Parliamentary conscience not much more than half a century ago. In this, as in so many other questions, Molesworth was in advance of his age, for it was not till fifteen years after his death that national education was dealt with in the Act of 1870 in a statesmanlike spirit.*

But it was in spite, rather than in consequence, of his pioneer spirit that Molesworth was returned a second time for East Cornwall without opposition. He wrote to his sister Elizabeth in 1834 that the Ministry were gradually, quietly sinking, and that his confidence in them had been reduced to zero. He added :—

I am neither surprised nor annoyed that Whig and Tory magnates [in Cornwall] should be against me. . . . The aristocratic principles of Whig and Tory are equally hateful to me. I refer them to my speeches and declarations to see whether I have changed my principles. I know they did not believe me and were convinced I should swim with the stream. They find themselves in the wrong ; let them throw me out if they can.

In his address to the electors of East Cornwall, dated 1st January 1835, he says, after a few introductory sentences :—

If I were merely to state that I am a Reformer, I should use a denomination which now embraces all political parties. To explain my sentiments more clearly I must inform you that there is much which requires to be altered and amended in the institutions of this Empire. My wish is to preserve and strengthen whatever is good ; to introduce it where it does not exist ; and to destroy whatever is bad.

He then specifies his support of the Ballot, Triennial Parliaments, Free Trade, National Education and Tithe Commutation.

No opponent entered the lists against him, but there were serious desertions from the ranks of his supporters, and he began to feel the position as member for the county "with hardly a gentleman to support me" as unsatisfactory and painful. The dissolution of 1834-35 came very suddenly upon the country, and the constituencies generally were unprepared for it ; but by 1836 Sir William had fully determined not to offer himself again for East Cornwall, and very soon after the General Election he was actively engaged in looking out for another constituency.

The rapid break-up of the large majority returned to support Lord Grey's administration of 1832 was chiefly caused by the incongruous

elements of which it was composed. The Whigs believed that the 1832 Reform Bill was the *ne plus ultra* of political enfranchisement ; the Radicals regarded it as merely a small step in the direction in which they wished to travel. The Radicals consequently were fighting the Whigs quite as stoutly as they were fighting the Tories, and with a great deal more acrimony. The Radicals felt themselves hampered at every turn for want of support in the press ; and they also felt the need of a club to be a meeting-place and rallying-point for their party. These two wants young Molesworth, with characteristic energy and munificence, set himself to supply.

The Philosophic Radicals did not venture on starting a daily paper of their own. Their organ was to be a review. It was christened *The London Review*, and John Stuart Mill was the first editor. Support was promised by James Mill, Carlyle, Roebuck, the Austins, Peacock, Buller and the Grotes. The question of the editorship seems to have been left open at the outset, for Carlyle had considerable hopes of the choice falling on himself and wrote to his mother to tell her so. It is worth remembering that John Stuart Mill, as editor of the Review, suggested to Carlyle in 1838 that he should write on Cromwell. Up to that time Carlyle had not given any special attention to the subject, and shared the then prevailing opinion

of Cromwell, looking upon him as a hypocrite and time-server, using his religion as a cloak for his personal ambition. A blunder on the part of Mill's sub-editor, who, during Mill's absence, wrote a note to Carlyle to tell him not to go on as "he meant to do Cromwell himself," infuriated the sage of Chelsea to such a degree that he severed his connection with the Review at once and entirely.¹ Carlyle's volume, *Letters and Speeches of Oliver Cromwell*, resulted partly from Mill's suggestion and partly from the subsequent quarrel. But the sub-editorial offence was not committed till four years after the start of the Review. Carlyle's vexation at not being chosen editor and the incident just named must be taken into account in weighing his later comments on the undertaking: "Mill is plodding along at his dull Review under dull auspices," etc. Carlyle left, however, in his *Reminiscences*, written after 1867, a vivid account of Sir William Molesworth's munificent way of setting the new magazine afloat: "'How much will your Review take to launch it, then?' asked he (all other Radical believers being so close of fist). 'Say £4000,' answered Mill. 'Here then,' writing a cheque for that amount, rejoined the other."

¹ The entry in Carlyle's diary is (December 1838): "To be edited by him [Robertson the sub-editor] and by Mill and the Benthamic formula! Oh heavens! It is worse than Algiers and Negro Guiana. Nothing short of death should drive a white man to it!"

John Mill's account of the same transaction in his autobiography corroborates Carlyle's :—

In the summer of 1834 [he writes], Sir William Molesworth, himself a laborious student and a precise and metaphysical thinker capable of aiding the cause by his pen as well as by his purse, proposed to establish a Review provided I would consent to be the real, if I could not be the ostensible editor.

Molesworth's private letters of 1834 and 1835 are full of his hopes and projects about the Review. To his sister Mary (now Mrs. Ford) he wrote in the highest spirits just before the appearance of the first number. His letter is such a good specimen of his home correspondence that we give it in full. It has perhaps more of the roystering schoolboy described by Carlyle¹ than the laborious student and precise metaphysical thinker of J. S. Mill, but it is not so very uncommon to combine the characters, and some readers may feel that the mixture is more attractive than either taken separately.

[Probable date, early spring 1835.]

MY DEAR WISE DOT,—I send you a pamphlet said to be written by Lord Brougham in order that you may learn

¹ In February 1835 Carlyle describes in his diary a party at the Bullers': "Roebuck Robespierre was there, an acrid, sandy, barren character, etc. . . . *Aus dem wird Wenig.* Sir William Molesworth with the air of a good roystering schoolboy pleased me considerably more. A man of rank can still do this, forget his rank wholly, and be the sooner esteemed for having the mind equal to doing that."

what sort of Christians Lords and Ladies are. It is not very good, but it is good enough for you ; if there is anything difficult for you to understand, get Elizabeth to explain it. Tell my Mother that I will write to her all about everything in a day or two. The following is all the news I have.

1. It is a fog.
2. Lord Canterbury, the man what we kicked out of the chair, is going to inspect the Canadians.
3. Lord Londonderry has refused to go to St. Petersburg.
4. I dined at Mrs. Buller's yesterday.
5. The round of beef is very good.
6. There is to be a great dinner to Lord John on Saturday, and I intend to go.
7. The Whigs and Radicals are fools. Myself and Roebuck the only wise men in and the two Mills the only wise men out of the House.
8. I am excessively obliged to Miss Dietz¹ for her cap.
9. Therefore *The London Review* will be the best of all Reviews, either past, present or future. *N.B.* If you understand logic (if not, ask Tommy the meaning of the word) you will perceive that No. 9 ought to follow No. 7.
10. Mr. Duppa is very well and is painting Roebuck.²
11. Grote has put off till God knows when his motion on the Ballot, and ought to be hanged for it.
12. The worsteds are difficult to get.
13. Roebuck was not out of temper when he spoke on Canada.

¹ His sister's governess.

² This picture is now at Pencarrow : also one, by the same self-taught artist, of Charles Buller.

14. Dissenters are to be married by the magistrate.
15. The weather is clearing up.
16. I ride one day and drive another.
17. I am going to Mrs. Grote's this evening, 11 Pall Mall.
18. The Queen [a new mare] goes admirably in harness.
19. The streets are very dirty.
20. Alderman Wood has brought in a bill against omnibuses and I intend to bring in a bill against gentlemen's carriages.
21. I go frequently to the India House.
22. I drove over a man, for which he cursed me. I drove back and gave him a sovereign, for which he blessed me.
23. I am smoking a cigar.
24. The lists on the malt-tax are very incorrect. Strutt, Roebuck, etc., voted in the majority, as did all the philosophic reformers.
25. I have nothing more to say.
26. "I am what I am" and "what" is your affectionate brother,
- WILLIAM MOLESWORTH.

P.S. Impart in strict confidence and eternal secrecy the contents of this letter to my mother, to Elizabeth, to Miss Dietz, to Tommy, etc., etc.

72 Pall Mall, *Thursday*.

In a more serious strain he had written from Pencarrow the previous autumn (October 1834) to Mrs. Grote :—

I have been living a great deal in the world and on horseback. Years have elapsed since I led so reckless a

life. In spite of it—in spite of the deepest potations—in spite of the severest fatigue—I never was so well in my life! Some time will elapse, I am afraid, ere your prognostic will be fulfilled that I shall not live long. Indeed I have just commenced Plato, in the Greek, though I have not opened a Greek book for ten years. I intend to peruse Aristotle and him previous to my departure to the land of shades. I have not been idle, however; I have an article, *Deo* (John Mill) *volente*, for the Review, which is, I hope, prospering. John is in such spirits that he says he would make it succeed single-handed. Old Mill will write, consequently we shall be "spectable."¹

It will be noticed from the letter just quoted that John Mill held a strict control over all articles in the Review notwithstanding the financial support given to it by Molesworth. In another letter a year later, 20th October 1835, he tells Mrs. Grote that "I am rather out of humour with John for refusing my article on Lord Brougham." "Certainly," he adds, "it was *too violently sarcastic and rather dry*." There was a difference of opinion, too, between Mill and Molesworth as to the value of literary articles. One of the lasting distinctions of *The London Review* is an article in the second number by John Mill, warmly appreciative of *Poems by Two Brothers* (1827), by the Tennysons, of *Poems, chiefly Lyrical* (1830), and of *Poems*

¹ This was one of the words of the coterie language, in use by the Radical group of the time.

by *Alfred Tennyson* (1832) ; it was the first really generous public recognition of the new poet. Molesworth made no secret of his want of sympathy with John Mill's taste in literature. Of a later article by J. S. Mill on De Tocqueville, Molesworth wrote : " It is rather better than the Tennyson, though it might be better still." These differences, however, made no break in the close friendship between the two young men.

The pecuniary indebtedness of the periodical to Molesworth was not confined to the transaction described by Carlyle ; there was another Radical Review in existence, known as *The Westminster*, which had been founded in 1824 by Bentham and the elder Mill ; it soon passed into the hands first of Mr. (afterwards Sir John) Bowring, then into those of General Perronet Thompson, author of the *Anti-Corn Law Catechism*. The existence of another Radical Review was prejudicial to the success of the newly-established *London*, and exactly a year after the appearance of the first number, April 1835, Sir William Molesworth bought *The Westminster* of General Perronet Thompson for £1000 and amalgamated the two Reviews under the title of *The London and Westminster Review*. His proprietorship lasted till 1837, when it was transferred to John Mill, who kept it till 1840, when it again changed hands, and the original title of the first Review, *The Westminster*, was resumed.

There was doubtless some little anxiety in the minds of Lady Molesworth and Mr. Woollcombe¹ when they saw how fast thousands could disappear in literary undertakings. Sir William was only four- or five-and-twenty, and his former guardians may be excused some little uneasiness. He explains in a letter to Woollcombe that the fusion of the two Reviews will be "a real economy," and cut down expenses very considerably. In a later letter from John Mill to Sir William, October 1838, there is a passage about a sum of £17 which Mill said was "on every account" Molesworth's, and he adds: "If you get it, let Woollcombe know that he may include it in the statement of your disbursements for the Review, which I am sorry to say it goes but a little way to liquidate."

The Review became an organ of very considerable weight and influence, and was representative for many years of the best literary talent in the Radical party. In its pages appeared J. S. Mill's famous defence of Lord Durham's policy in Canada, which formed a turning-point not only in the career of Lord Durham, but in the relation of Great Britain with her Colonies. This subject will be referred to more fully in a future chapter. The article by John Mill on Tennyson has been already mentioned; he also wrote an enthusiastic

¹ Sir William's solicitor, and his devoted friend through life. He was trustee for the Pencarrow estate after Sir William's death.

appreciation of Carlyle's *French Revolution*; his father contributed two articles to the opening number, and continued, though in failing health, to give his best efforts to the Review till his death, in 1836. From the first he took a keen interest in the success of the Review and declined to accept any payment for his contributions. Sir William wrote to his mother in reference to the opening number of *The London Review*, April 1835 :—

The first article by Mr. Mill is such as no one but he could write, and is in his very best political style. He has behaved most generously to us and refuses to take anything for his writings, thus saving us in the first number some sixty or seventy pounds.

The elder Mill shared his son's high opinion of Molesworth's character and capacity. Professor Alexander Bain, in his *Life of James Mill*, says that the elder man valued the younger both on account of his ability and for having the courage of his convictions. When James Mill died in 1836 it was noted that of all the friends present at the funeral Molesworth was one of those most notably overcome by grief. In anticipation of James Mill's death, Sir William wrote to his mother :—

His loss will be much felt by us who look up to him with the greatest respect : more especially by myself, who invariably go to him whenever I have any political difficulty to solve.



“ A LEADING ARTICLE OF THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW ”

Political Sketches, No. 535, by John Doyle. Published 2nd May 1838.

Sir William's own articles in the early numbers of *The London Review* are chiefly on the political subjects by which he was for the time engrossed. The only exception discoverable to this rule is a dissertation by him on "Dreaming" in the second number. His interest in the colonies is manifested by an article on New South Wales in an early number. His growing determination to make a concentrated attack on the then prevalent system of transportation of convicts to Australia is demonstrated in a letter to his sister Elizabeth, dated June 1835, in which he says, in reference to the second number of the Review, then about to appear: "John Austin has taken my subject of secondary punishments, which, as he will do it better than any man in England, I do not regret."

In the words of Mr. Ford's unpublished memoir already quoted: "He made use of his articles for a double purpose; they served as materials for speeches and as reports of their substance." The pages of *The London* and of *The London and Westminster Review* from 1834 to 1837 thus afford evidence of the direction of Sir William's chief political activities.

There was a continuous and frank interchange of views and news, seasoned by a good sprinkling of "chaff," in these early years between Sir William and his friend Mrs. Grote. She has left on record that to Mr. Grote "he looked up as a

disciple might to a master, whilst in myself he found an indulgent friend and monitress. I liked and esteemed his noble, frank, and chivalrous character, and took pleasure in affording him the privilege of unreserved and confidential intercourse." With all her Radicalism she had a great sense of what was fitting and *comme il faut*, and she had evidently reproached him for too outspoken or too crude an expression of extreme opinions. In writing to her about the prospectus of the new *London Review* he retaliates by promising a conditional welcome to any article she might like to write, "provided you are not too violent." He ends by begging her to entreat Grote to send an article he had promised on Swiss politics.

In a letter to his mother referring to the second number of *The London Review*, July 1835, Sir William speaks of the sensation caused by the publication of De Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, and says that he has secured a promise from De Tocqueville to write for the Review on France.¹

There is an article on the Church by Mr. Mill; one on Bailey's book by John; another by the same on Tennyson's poetry; one on Crabbe's poetry by Blanco

¹ This promise was fulfilled in the following year. In the first number of the periodical, after it had assumed the title of *The London and Westminster Review* (April 1836), appeared an article by De Tocqueville called "A View of the Political Condition of France," which excited very great interest in political and literary circles.

White ; on Canada by Roebuck ; on Austria, a *most interesting* article, by a German of the name of Garnier . . . on Dreaming by myself ; on Military Abuses, a very interesting article, it is said ; on Portugal ; on Napier's Ionian Islands, and a Parliamentary review by John Mill. Bulwer promised us ; but broke his promise.

References to political rumours follow, and he continues :—

I am very busy with philosophy and reading Brougham's new book, which is most infernal trash.

The Review was now well launched, and has kept its flag flying, though with varying fortunes, ever since.

CHAPTER IV

THE REFORM CLUB

GROTE's motion on the Ballot, which Sir William Molesworth told his sister had been put off "to God knows when, and he ought to be hanged for it," came on in June 1835. Molesworth seconded him. Charles Buller's favourable opinion of his friend's speech has been already quoted.¹ The Speaker told Charles Austin that in his opinion Molesworth would in ten years be one of the first men in the country. Molesworth wrote to his mother that his speech had gained him the greatest approbation.

Every one allows [he says] that we had infinitely the superiority in the debate. Charles Buller's reply is acknowledged by all to have been most masterly, one of the best I ever heard and most enthusiastically received. . . . It was a most gratifying debate; it was the first one in which the younger Radicals had displayed themselves and had obliged the leaders of the other parties to rise against them; in spite of Lord John,

¹ See p. 52.



Thomas Woodcombe.

Charles Butler, M.P.

Arscott Curry, Moleworth. John Temple Leuder, M.P.

"Greek" Frelowny Sir M. Moleworth, Bart., M.P.

Stanley and Peel, one-third of the House decided with us : we were a majority of Lord John's former supporters and many of their best friends stayed away. We have damaged the Whigs, and some of them had better look to their seats. . . . There is but one opinion with regard to the present administration, they are the miserablest brutes that God Almighty ever put guts into. Lord Brougham told Lord Kerry that it was the only Ministry in which there was not a single man of talent.

The foregoing passage is quoted, not because history has confirmed the sweeping strictures of the young Radical (a Ministry which included Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell cannot be said to have been entirely bereft of men of talent), but to illustrate the extreme tension which existed in 1835 between the various sections of the Liberal party. Besides the Whigs and the Radicals, there was, then as now, the Irish party, and each section regarded the other two with vehement hostility and distrust.

It was felt by the Radicals that their political group wanted cohesion and unity of aim, and with a view to bringing its members into closer personal relation with one another Sir William Molesworth and Mr. John Temple Leader, the member for Westminster, took a house jointly in Eaton Square, where they entertained their political friends and made plans for concerted political action. The writer of the notice of Sir

William in "The Maclise Portrait Gallery" (already quoted) does not fail to remark sarcastically on the flag of liberty being hoisted from a fine house in Eaton Square: "They are convinced that their party will dissolve unless rallied round one particular standard, and they have set up this liberty flag in Eaton Square. They keep a French cook and feed their less fortunate political brethren,—a generosity noble on their part, but indeed necessary; for the wholesome quality of the viands serves to keep these Radicals from starving and likewise greatly elevates the *morale* of the men." One of Charles Buller's jokes of the period was that the Reform party had been disintegrated and all the aggressive Radicals turned into Moderate Whigs by the excellence of the Speaker's cook. Possibly the dinners given by Molesworth and Leader in Eaton Square were an attempt to lead the flock back to the vigour of their former political professions.

A private house, however, can never be a satisfactory headquarters for a political party, and early in 1835 Molesworth began to write in his private letters of the desirability of forming a club. In the new Parliament of 1835 the Liberal majority was only twenty-three, and this narrow margin gave additional strength and importance to the Radical group, who now had it in their power at any moment to put their

nominal leaders in a minority and consequently to extract concessions from them.

The development of the scheme which was afterwards embodied in the founding of the Reform Club is best described in two letters from Sir William Molesworth to his mother. The first was written on 19th February 1835, and the second almost exactly a year later :—

MY DEAR MOTHER—To-day begin the toils, contest and moils of the session. We hope and, I believe, will beat [*sic*] if there be any faith in promises. Woe unto them that fail ; however, it will be very close. Our majority is calculated at twenty-three.¹

I was at two meetings yesterday, first at a Radical one. For you must know that a Radical party has been formed separate from the Whigs and from the Irish, to assist in the formation of which was one of my chief objects in coming to town so early. We shall ere long amount to between seventy and eighty. Most probably Grote will be the leader. We intend to have constant meetings in order to concert our measures and oppose the Tories. This is the commencement of a party which will one day or another bring destruction upon both Whigs and Tories.

We next had a meeting with the Whigs. Lord John made a speech and requested us not to abuse Sutton² and not to cheer if we gained the victory. . . . As another

¹ The Tories were in office at the beginning of 1835. The Whigs came in in April. The first great fight, here referred to, was for the Speakership.

² This refers to the fight for the Speakership. Mr. Manners Sutton (afterwards Lord Canterbury) was “the man what we kicked out of the chair” (see p. 61), and also the man with the persuasive cook. The Right Hon.

means of attacking the Tories a Liberal Club is to be formed, of which the more Liberal Whigs, Radicals, etc., will be members. Lords Durham, Mulgrave, etc., are anxious about it. It will be like the Athenæum—a good dining club. The great object is to get the Reformers of the country to join it, so that it may be a place of meeting for them when they come to town. It is much wanted. Brooks' is not Liberal enough, too expensive and not a dining club.

The second letter on the formation of the Reform Club was written in February 1836.

MY DEAR MOTHER—I have not been able to write to you for an age. I have been so excessively occupied. I am going to second Hume's motion against the Orangemen on Tuesday. I shall make a long speech, and I think there will be a grand debate. I have been much occupied in establishing a political club to be called the Reform Club, the history of the transactions with regard to which will

James Abercrombie was elected. Among the Pencarrow papers is a sheet in Sir William's writing—

“Abercrombie, 316.

Sutton, 306.

Abercrombie elected, God be praised.”

Greville gives a very interesting account of this exciting fight. There was a great deal of betting on it; Greville won £55, and would have won more, but he got frightened towards the close and hedged. It illustrates the manners of the times to find that Molesworth, writing to his sister Elizabeth, thus described the devices of the Tories to induce a well-known Liberal M.P. to stay away: “That old rascal T—— came to town for the Speaker-ship vote and returned to ——shire to hunt the next day. . . . *On dit* that the Tories offered him if he would stay away *le plus beau cheval et la plus belle femme* in the county.”

amuse you much. Last year we attempted to do the same thing, but it failed in consequence of the Whigs being opposed to it secretly, and it would have failed again this year if they had taken the lead or if we had allowed ourselves to be humbug'd by them. You know soon after I came to town I saw Hume. I pressed him to exert himself to form a club independently of the Whigs and to leave them to join us if they thought proper. He was willing. He and I had several meetings with Joe Parkes and Ewart, and we looked out for houses, and communications were made to Ellice and one or two of the most Liberal Whigs who evidently wished to throw us over again and to procrastinate. This I had expected. Nothing was done previous to my going to Birmingham. Parkes and myself came to the determination that a blow must be struck and that we must make Joe [Hume] do it. I sat next to Hume and stirred him up as much as I could. Still nothing was done till the Tuesday. Ellice was to return from Paris on the Wednesday, and I knew if he were admitted to the preliminary consultations all was up for the present. Parkes sent for me, and I went to Hume and told him now was the time or never. He agreed to a meeting the next day, and we sent word to a very few persons ; seven persons only came, five of them only M.P.'s. *We* determined first *That there should be a Reform Club*. We then put fifty names down, almost all of them M.P.'s whom we knew were favourable to such a scheme. We appointed them the provisional committee. . . . We dated our meeting London and left them to find out who had been present. This was a most bold and impudent blow. And I don't believe, except the five who were present, any other persons of our party would have assented to such a proceeding. . . . We

took the best of the Radicals and no Whigs. On the Thursday the House met. Many of the circulars had been presented ; the Whigs consequently saw them and were thunderstruck—if they did not join they thought we should make a club alone and become their masters. If they succeeded in preventing a club, they thought they would offend the fifty mortally, and the party and their power would be destroyed ; they were at the same time excessively frightened by the proposal to leave them in the lurch. A shell had been thrown into the midst of them and had exploded ; who threw it they could not make out. They went about endeavouring to trace who had been present at the meeting which issued this circular. They could only trace three persons, Parkes, Hume, and myself. We had shown fifty good Radicals, who, though none of them individually would probably have assented to such a proceeding, would not flinch or complain of being put on the committee ; indeed every one of them had either this year or last expressed his opinion in favour of the club to some one of us. On the Thursday I met Ellice and asked him sneeringly if he had come from Paris to assist us in making a club. On the Friday he came to me as I was going out of the House and requested me to tell him what we were about. I informed him we were forming a club ; he asked me why we had not consulted him and the more Liberal Whigs. Because, I replied, you twice frustrated our attempts last year ; now we were determined to have a club, and they might join us and we should be delighted at their so doing. He then asked if the Radicals intended to lead the Whigs, and said if we acted in this manner we should break up the party. I replied we had no such intention and wished them to join us, and we intended to write them so to do ;

if he thought that the Whigs were to lead us as they thought proper, he was quite mistaken ; we would have a club. You may easily suppose that this conversation was not one of the most courteous description. I suppose you know who Ellice is. He was Secretary at War, brother-in-law of Lord Grey. We agreed at last to go to Parkes in Great George Street—we were joined by Stanley, Secretary of the Treasury ;¹ between the four a discussion—an angry one—took place. At last Ellice offered to assist in the formation of a club and oblige the Whigs to join us, if we would consent to a committee containing a fair proportion of Whigs. To this Parkes and I assented. Ellice then wrote down the names of thirty-five persons, to whom we assented. Twenty of them were Radicals and fifteen Whigs ; several of them were junior members of the administration, whose consent Ellice and Stanley pledged themselves to obtain, and we promised to get the list assented to at the meeting of the next day. We then parted. As you may imagine, Parkes and myself were delighted. I doubt whether we could form a club without the assistance of the Whigs. We had them now ; they had come to us ; they had assented to a list written out by themselves ; it was impossible for them to retract. Our next object was to get the Radical meeting to consent to this list—a delicate task, as many who were solicited to form the first committee might be offended at their names not being put upon this one. At the same time it was of the utmost importance that not the slightest alteration should be made, lest a pretext might be given to the Whigs, who we suspected would repent of what they had been about (such we found to be the case afterwards, and I hear they complain that we

¹ Afterwards Lord Stanley of Alderley.

took them by surprise and had got them to assent to a list without calculating the number of Radicals upon it. Moreover, O'Connell was a bitter pill to many of them. Ellice himself, however, had proposed him and written him down). The next morning Parkes and myself started off to Hume, and he approved of all we had done, and said he would get the consent of the meeting. He took the chair. Everything went off most harmoniously and all appeared delighted. Afterwards, as we had suspected, there was a slight attempt to shuffle. Stanley told Parkes and myself that he must first obtain the consent of Lord John, and complained of our having divulged the meeting between us. To this we replied that we felt ourselves in no way bound to secrecy; they had come to us, and they knew what they were about and ought to have obtained Lord John's consent before they proposed a list to us. We had pledged ourselves for our friends; we had performed our promise, and they must perform theirs or take the consequences of an exposure which would now infallibly break up the party. They d——d Parkes and cursed me in their hearts. But as there was no help for it, they have very wisely determined to get all their friends to join the club. Most of the Cabinet are now original members: the Dukes of Sussex and of Norfolk, etc. We have admitted already above six hundred persons. Our success is certain. It will be the best club in town, and the effect will be to break up the Whig party by joining the best of them to the Radicals, and the club will be the political centre of the Empire, and augment our power immensely. All we want is organisation. This we shall now obtain. We had no place of meeting. Ten Radical M.P.'s were never to be found together except in the House, conse-

quently no one knew what his neighbour was about. This disorganisation the Whigs desired, and on this account they have always in secret been opposed to a club. Now their only remaining hope is to join us in such numbers as to have the predominance; they will fail in this respect. They have never been in social contact with us yet; I don't fear their influence; some few they may seduce, but very few, whilst we shall gain many of them, for in all arguments we are their superiors. The most intelligent of them are aware of all this and have made up their minds to it. Indeed, strange is the progress of political events, and we must allow that Ministers have been acting *very well* of late. We are amazingly cordial now. *Keep* this letter and don't read it to all the world.

The Happy Family so vividly described in the foregoing letter managed to subsist side by side in the same club. But Sir William's confident prediction that the Radicals would absorb the Whigs was doomed to disappointment. The process of absorption was in the other direction. The Radical party began to melt away, and the philosophical Radicals especially quickly approached a vanishing point. It was in the autumn of this year, 1836, in which the "bold and impudent blow" had been struck and the club so triumphantly founded, that Charles Buller uttered his well-known witticism, which is bound to be quoted whenever philosophical Radicalism is mentioned. Staying late after a party at the Grotes'

house at Dulwich in the late autumn of 1836, Sir William Molesworth, Charles Buller, and their host and hostess sat discussing the Parliamentary outlook, when Buller summed up the situation by exclaiming: "I see what we are coming to, Grote; in no very long time from this, only you and I will be left to 'tell' Molesworth." More seriously Mrs. Grote had entered in her diary about the same time: "Mr. Grote and about five others find themselves left to sustain the Radical opinions of the House of Commons." The next session Radical prospects were still waning, and Mrs. Grote wrote to Sir William after the General Election of 1837:—

I don't see how we Radicals are to make head this coming Parliament at all. . . . The brunt of the battle will have to be sustained by Grote and you, aided by Buller, Leader, Charles Villiers and a few more. . . . Take care of your health, and don't sit *smurring* indoors, but take air and exercise, I entreat you. George sends love; he has no heart in the coming session and deplores the loss of old William IV. daily. How amusing! He is above all anxious for Hume to get seated somehow.

One cause of the downfall of Radical hopes was to be found in the flood of loyalty that greeted the accession of the young Queen. This was why Grote uttered daily lamentations for the death of King William. But there were other causes at

work consuming the energy and weakening the faith of the Radicals. The fault was in themselves, not in their stars and not in the causes for which they worked, nearly all of which were in time successfully prosecuted, and have received and merit universal commendation.

The failure of the Radicals of the second quarter of the nineteenth century was a failure which may be considered equivalent to success. The causes they espoused triumphed so completely that the Tories of this generation are more Liberal than the Liberals of 1832.

CHAPTER V

THE ORANGE LODGES

IN the letter from Sir William Molesworth to his mother, quoted at length in the last chapter, he refers to a recent visit to Birmingham, and also states that he is "going to second Hume's motion against the Orangemen on Tuesday." The visit to Birmingham had been for the purpose of attending a public dinner and a meeting of the National Political Union, the famous association which had had so considerable a share in achieving the final victory in the battle for Reform. Sir William travelled to Birmingham with Joe Parkes, leaving London in a chariot at eight o'clock on Wednesday evening and reaching Birmingham at twelve noon the next day. He attended the public dinner, at which 1000 people sat down in the finest room he had ever seen; he made a speech; then went to the meeting, at which he spoke again; left Birmingham at one o'clock on

the Friday morning and reached London again at five the same evening. People talk of the nervous exhaustion caused by the rush and pace of modern life ; but travelling by coach for thirty-two hours between Wednesday at 8 P.M. and Friday at 5 P.M. and filling the rest of the forty-five hours by dining in public, attending meetings and making speeches, would be considered a rather exhausting performance even at the present time. This hurried journey was in January 1836. No doubt Sir William wanted to get into touch with the Birmingham Radicals, but he does not appear to have been very favourably impressed by them. "Shrewd but uneducated men," he describes them in a home letter ; "the young men, however, are a much better set." He was surprised at the mildness of their speeches, and says he was the only one who "spoke out."

On his return his time was divided between the establishment of the Reform Club and preparation for his speech on the Orange Lodges. His speeches were always most carefully prepared ; he worked at the facts on which he raised his structure of argument as carefully as a barrister gets up his brief. All contemporary accounts of his speeches agree that they were elaborate treatises, the result of hard study and industrious research. He thought no trouble too great to enable him to get a complete grasp of all the facts bearing on

the subject on which he spoke. He was no facile orator, and he was better in set speeches than in the cut-and-thrust of debate. But the labour he bestowed upon the material of his speeches is the main reason of their enduring influence. He looked not so much to the victory of the moment as to the establishment of principles on which he believed the progress of the future depended. It was said of him at the time of his death :—

The elaborate care with which he was known to prepare his speeches, and certain natural defects of manner and elocution, prevented his becoming a popular orator in the House of Commons ; but the weapons which he wielded were weighty, and probably no one ever produced so much effect in so few speeches. The moral nature of the man was a fitting counterpart to the intellectual. Simple, sincere, and straightforward, without fear and without compromise, no man's assertions carried more weight, no man received or deserved more entire credit for consistency of principle and singleness of purpose.—*Times*, 23rd October 1855.

These characteristics were very prominent in his speech on the Orange Lodges on 23rd February 1836. His readiness to prove an assertion which was believed at the moment to be a mere oratorical flourish was one of the most marked triumphs of the speech, which seems to have won him great applause in all respects.

Mrs. Grote, in her description of Sir William Molesworth, dwells on his sense of the injustice and wrongs under which the bulk of the English people suffered and the intensity of his desire to bring about a healthier and juster administration of the laws. In 1834 an event had happened close to his native county which had aroused these sentiments in the highest degree. In the early years of the rise of Trades' Unionism an attempt was made by working-class leaders to form what was called a Grand National Trades' Union—that is, not merely a union within one particular trade, but a combination among the labouring classes generally, with the object of improving their condition. On 17th March 1834, six Dorsetshire labourers were sentenced to seven years' transportation for administering illegal oaths in connection with their efforts to induce their fellow-labourers to join this National Trades' Union. This iniquitous sentence aroused among the whole body of real reformers the most lively indignation. These poor and ignorant men were sentenced under an obsolete statute which had been passed in order to meet the case of mutiny in the Navy. For indulging in the foolery of a drawn sword and bandaged eyes and other paraphernalia of oath-taking, doubtless borrowed from the recollection of masonic ceremonies, six men were consigned to a punishment almost worse than

death.¹ In superficial natures the rage awakened by such judicial atrocities produces but a superficial effect. But with those who possess tenacity of purpose and strength of will the keen emotion of the moment hardens into stern resolve to devote throughout life all the best powers they possess to make such injustice impossible in the future. The history of social and legal reform in England is starred with the names of many such men and women, and among them that of William Molesworth deserves to be remembered and honoured. The first result of his indignation is to be found in his speech on the Orange Lodges—what was sauce for the Dorsetshire labourer should be sauce for a Royal Duke. The second result was a close examination into the character of the punishment of transportation, which resulted in his determination to prove to the whole country that it possessed every evil and disadvantage which could accrue to any penal system, and that it was necessarily attended by moral evils of the most appalling character. The Parliamentary inquiry

¹ “A free pardon was sent out to these men in 1837; but not without an extraordinary display of physical force on the part of the Trades’ Unionists. On 21st April 1837, 30,000 working men displayed themselves in London, each armed with the tools of his trade, preference being given to such as could be used as weapons. It was proposed to meet violence by violence; twenty-nine pieces of artillery were brought up from Woolwich to Whitehall, and small cannon were mounted on the roofs of the Government offices; but the danger of conflict was averted by the Ministry giving way, and the Dorsetshire labourers were recalled from Van Diemen’s Land.”—Miss Martineau, *Thirty Years’ Peace*, vol. ii. pp. 155-156.

into the effects of transportation for which Molesworth moved for a Select Committee in 1837 was the first public outcome of two years' previous study given to the subject. This is proved by his correspondence. Indirectly resulting from his study of the subject of transportation and its effects grew his more general interest in Colonial government and his conviction that the only reasonable system was to allow the Colonies self-government on democratic lines. Like Saul, who started to find his father's asses and found a kingdom, Molesworth set out to protest against the iniquity of the sentence passed on the Dorsetshire labourers and found his life's work. First, the destruction of transportation as a secondary punishment, and secondly, the establishment of the principle of Colonial self-government.

As the first step on this path, the attack on the Orange Lodges and on the Duke of Cumberland as their Grand Master receives whatever interest may accrue to it at this time. The present generation quite correctly associates Orangeism with the North of Ireland, especially with Belfast, where the Orange Lodges are known to be intensely loyal and intensely Protestant, with a loyalty and a Protestantism which cannot be produced save by the exciting proximity of disloyalty and Roman Catholicism. This also was in the main the history of Orangeism from its foundation till about 1828.

There were two or three isolated Orange Lodges in England and Scotland early in the nineteenth century, but only in places where the Northern Irish had migrated in considerable numbers. About 1828, however, Orangeism began to spread rapidly in England and Wales. The Duke of Cumberland became the Grand Master, and Lord Kenyon the Deputy Grand Master. The Bishop of Salisbury was the Grand Chaplain: no salary was attached to chaplaincies of the lodges, but it was naïvely stated that the position was one which "might lead to promotion." The Duke, with a mockery of the formalities of a Royal Commission, appointed his "trustworthy and well-beloved" Colonel Fairman to go about the country and establish Orange Lodges wherever he could, even in the Army. This the Duke afterwards denied, but the House of Commons Committee which took evidence on the whole subject in 1835 gravely reported that they found it most difficult to reconcile statements in evidence before them with ignorance of those proceedings on the part of H.R.H. the Duke of Cumberland. This may be taken as the nearest approach to giving H.R.H. the lie direct which the *convenances* of a Select Committee admitted of. The exciting cause of this outburst of Protestantism in such a precious upholder of religion in any form as the Duke of Cumberland, was the passing of the Catholic

Emancipation Act by the Duke of Wellington's Government in 1829, and the political agitation leading up to it. The commission of Colonel Fairman on behalf of his Royal Master was to represent to groups of people, whom he was to induce to form Orange Lodges, that on the presently expected demise of the Crown (George IV. died in the following year) the next heir, the Duke of Clarence, was insane and the second heir presumptive "was not alone a female but a minor." Under these circumstances, so Colonel Fairman was to lead his dupes to believe, the Duke of Wellington would probably seize the Crown unless his machinations were frustrated by the loyal Orange Lodges insisting that the Duke of Cumberland should be King. To us all this seems like the idle dream of a crack-brained fanatic; but at the time it did not seem so preposterous as it seems to us. In this as in so many other things, people then looked at events by the light of the French Revolution. Napoleon Bonaparte, from being the servant of France had made himself her master, and had reigned as her Emperor. Was there therefore anything intrinsically absurd in Wellington, the conqueror of Napoleon, aspiring to place a crown upon his brow? Fairman's campaign in the country met with no little success. He boasted that the Orange army consisted of 140,000 men. He started a

campaign among Lord Londonderry's pitmen, but did not find them very amenable to his seductions. From time to time he returned to headquarters and was closeted for hours together with the Duke of Cumberland at Kew. Lord Kenyon wrote that in the last two and a half years he had spent nearer £20,000 than £10,000 "in the good cause." Thirty lodges were formed in the Army and Navy. Soldiers and sailors were attracted to the organisation by a remission of the fees. As in the case of the Dorsetshire labourers, all the solemn mummerly of the administration of oaths was gone through, and signs and passwords were adopted. In the session of 1835, Joseph Hume moved for a Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry on the subject. Most of the evidence was obtained by means of a man named Haywood, who had once belonged to the Orange organisation but had turned against it. On 4th August 1835, Hume moved a series of resolutions, ending with an address to the Crown asking for the condemnation of the proceedings of the Orangemen in the formation of lodges in the Army. On the motion of Lord John Russell, the debate was adjourned for a week, to give the Duke of Cumberland time to withdraw or explain; but he did neither. On 11th August, Lord John said that the Duke had not done what the House had the right to expect of him; and Mr. Hume's resolutions were, with some modifications, agreed

to. On 19th August, the House was informed that the “trusty and well-beloved” Colonel Fairman had refused to produce a letter-book required by the Committee. Fairman was committed to Newgate for breach of privilege, but sought safety in flight. Haywood was prosecuted for libel. Molesworth was one of a small group who made themselves responsible for his defence, and retained Buller and Austin as his counsel. The trial, however, never came on ; for Haywood broke a blood-vessel, and died before the proceedings began. Molesworth wrote an article on the Orange Lodges, based on the evidence given before the House of Commons Committee ; this appeared in the January number, 1836, of *The London Review*. It was resolved to prosecute, under the same law by means of which the Dorsetshire labourers had been condemned, the Duke of Cumberland, Lord Kenyon, and the Bishop of Salisbury. In all of this we trace the hand of Molesworth. It is the same spirit which dictated the letter to his sister quoted on p. 60 : “Alderman Wood has brought in a Bill against omnibuses, and I intend to bring in a Bill against gentlemen’s carriages.” He was determined to make the governing classes smart under the very same lash which they had complacently prepared for the groundlings. The rest of the story can now best be told by the Pencarrow letters.

SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH TO HIS MOTHER

January 1836.

I returned to town rather tired [this was after the Birmingham excursion], and was much vexed at finding Haywood, whose defence we had undertaken, and whose trial would have come on to-day, was dead by the bursting of a blood-vessel. For various political reasons, the indictments [against the Duke of Cumberland, etc.] will not be presented now till March. This delay annoys me ; it cannot, however, be avoided without endangering our ultimate success, and I still hope we may bring the culprits to trial and convict them.

Mr. Hume wanted all proceedings stayed till after the House of Commons debate, because, by the well-known rule, it would have been impossible to have a debate on a subject that was at the same moment being tried in the Law Courts. Hume stuck staunchly to his guns, and Sir William wrote again to his mother in the month of January 1836 :—

I saw Hume on Friday. He is an admirable person, and I will never laugh at his blunders again. He is worth 100 of your do-nothing gents.

The debate took place on 23rd February 1836, and Sir William seconded Mr. Hume's "tremendous resolution" proposing an address to the King praying him to discharge all Orangemen and members of other secret political associations from all offices, civil and military. Sir William's speech

was an unqualified success. Here is his own description of it, followed by extracts from letters from his brother Arscott and his friend Mr. Duppa, who were present on the occasion :—

Feb. 24, 1836.

MY DEAR MOTHER—We have destroyed the Orangemen. Last night I seconded Hume with a success which exceeded my most sanguine anticipations. The House was full, 400 at least present. Hume made a long and confused speech. He contrived woefully to tangle and to confuse the clearest subject. The House was weary when I rose. I contrived quickly to excite their attention and to stimulate their feelings. I could hardly finish a sentence, so loud and enthusiastic were the cheers : never even amongst my most ardent followers was I so much applauded. In the midst of my speech a most fortunate event happened. I cited some expressions made use of by one of the Orange members in a document ; he rose furiously and asked me what I meant. I told him, and referred to the document, which at the moment I could not find. The Opposition thought they would put me down, and called upon me to read it. I turned to my friends and desired them to look for it, then coolly proceeded with my speech. I had hardly said three sentences when it was put into my hands. I read it, put my glass into my eye, and looked at him, and thanked God that the expression used by the member in that document was an incorrect one.¹

¹ The member was Mr. Randal Plunkett, M.P. for Drogheda : the expression he had used was a reference to the Duke of Cumberland as the individual "nearest to the throne" in the United Kingdom, with a curious oblivion of the existence of Princess Victoria as heiress-presumptive.

Thus I crushed him, and proved to the satisfaction of friend and foe that I was not to be put down easily. When I finished I was congratulated by every one. It would be too egotistical to repeat all that was said to me in praise by the leading men. . . . The Tories said it was a most infamous speech, and cursed me most cordially for it. Duppa and Arscott were in the House, so was my friend C. Austin, who said I spoke with an audacity worthy of the French Convention—the boldest speech he ever heard. Thus we have slain the Orangemen.—Your affectionate Son,

WM. MOLESWORTH.

Arscott Molesworth also wrote on the same day to his mother :—

41 CAREY STREET,
Feb. 24, 1836.

MY DEAR MOTHER—I went to hear William on the Orange Lodges, and splendidly he spoke, with a great deal of animation and without that false voice which whenever I have heard him before he used to have. Joe Hume was, and is, I believe, always a sad hand. You saw Randal Plunkett's interruption. William set him down admirably. Could anything be worse than what Peel said? His observation as regards William was absurd, as it would prevent any M.P. from calling His Majesty's Ministers to account for not prosecuting a criminal for fear of sending him to be tried with the stigma of a vote of the House of Commons attached to him. Glorious immunity for His Majesty's Attorney-General! I have never been so much delighted, and I fear have written nonsense in consequence. But Austin and everybody who was near me agreed that it was one

of the best, tho' the most audacious speech ever delivered. The Tories say it was the most rascally. It quite slagged them, to use a slang expression. Austin said to a friend of his while Wm. was speaking on the *law points*, "He is a d——d clear-headed fellow this." This I overheard.—With love to you all. Believe me, your dutiful Son,

A. O. MOLESWORTH.

Mr. Duppa's letter, written on 26th February 1836, completes the narrative :—

86 NEUMAN STREET, *Friday*.

Did you ever, my dear Lady Molesworth, pass thro' a farmyard and see a hen with one duck? If you have you may easily figure to yourself the situation in which I was placed on Tuesday night when your dearest first-born got up to make his speech in the House of Commons against the Orange Lodges. I was the Hen, he the Duck. The Duck was about to swim, and the Hen was naturally in a fright. However, the Hen was glad when she perceived the Duck land safely on the other side of the pond—so was I when William finished his oration.

I believe there is nothing so gratifying to a mother's feelings as reading the praises of her son. I mean to gratify your vanity by praising William.

You have, I doubt not, read over William's speech *more than once*, and are in consequence acquainted with the matter, though not perhaps with the manner of his delivery.

He rose, not with the diffidence which generally characterises and so well becomes one of his age, but

with a degree of self-confidence worthy the Great Dan himself, and spoke with wonderful energy—failed neither in quotation nor reference until interrupted by Mr. Randal Plunkett. He begged some explanation, which you will find in the report. Well, explanation given, Wm. stuck his glass firmly in his eye, transfixed the hon. member with his look, and said, with a *sang-froid* of which the most experienced debater might well have been proud: “I hope the hon. member’s memory is refreshed.” You who know him so well will be able to appreciate this sketch, and will be able to add the colouring necessary to complete the picture. He then expounded the laws relative to Orange and other societies using secret signs and oaths, told them those who frequented such societies subjected themselves to transportation—that the Duke of Cumberland and his clique ought not to be spared because they were rich and well educated, whilst the poor ignorant Dorchester labourers were suffering for the infringement of those laws which they were unable to understand.

William gave out the names of the titled criminals, as he termed them, with exquisite bitterness, and clenched his red pocket-handkerchief in his fist towards the conclusion of his address as though he were tearing up Orange societies by the root. Tremendous cheering followed his speech. In fact, he *distinguished himself*, and I have little hesitation in saying that if he goes on as he has begun he will one day make about the best, though not perhaps the most prudent, speaker in the House. Arscott and myself were in the House from 4 o’clock in the afternoon until 2 in the morning. Arscott turned very pale when his brother rose. . . . After *the* speech, for it was assuredly *the* speech of the night, William,

Arscott, and your humble servant adjourned to Bellamy's Kitchen, where we demolished sundry mutton chops, Welsh rabbits, bottles of porter and sherry—no bad finale to the night's fatigue, for, by Jove, it is a monstrous bore to sit in the same place for ten consecutive hours. Thank God, I am not a M.P.”

The great sensation of the speech had been the reference to the Duke of Cumberland by name.

The speech called upon “the law officers of the Crown to present to the Grand Jury of Middlesex bills of indictment against the Imperial Grand Master, the Duke of Cumberland, against the Grand Master of England, Lord Kenyon, against the Grand Secretary, Lord Chandos; and to these worthies let them not forget to add the Right Reverend Father in God, Thomas, Lord Bishop of Salisbury. Thus these statutes, which were the creation of the sworn enemies of the people, may now, as it were by a retribution of Divine Providence, become the means of crushing this institution—of destroying this *imperium in imperio*, and of laying prostrate its chief. At his fate none of his followers will mourn. A few years' residence on the shores of the Southern Ocean would teach him and other titled criminals that the laws of their country are not to be violated with impunity, and that equal justice is now to be administered to the high and to the low.”

In a long letter to Woollcombe, Molesworth described the further development of the debate. Lord John Russell met the situation with courage and resolution. He moved an address to the King, praying His Majesty to take such measures

as might be necessary for the suppression of the societies. The Orangemen in the House offered no opposition, and Lord John's motion was agreed to unanimously. Two days later the King's reply was received : it was completely in harmony with the spirit of the address. The Home Secretary sent a copy to the Duke of Cumberland ; the Duke accepted the situation, and promised that he would immediately proceed to dissolve the societies complained of. Sir William Molesworth writes to Woollcombe :—

We have put the Orangemen down. They were abandoned by all parties, and their leaders consented to die. Thus ends our question with the Hoary Duke. Our indictments were ready, and we should have brought him to trial. This would now be most inexpedient, and would only open in a court of justice a question now satisfactorily settled.

The abandonment of the prosecution of H.R.H. and the other "titled criminals" was a considerable relief to Woollcombe in his character of careful steward of the Molesworth estates. He writes to Lady Molesworth to express his very great satisfaction that the debate had ended as it had. "The indictment," he says, "was after all a fearful sort of business, and, to say the least of it, would have involved a tremendous expense." Lady Molesworth appeared to fear that the tables would be turned, and that her son would be prosecuted

for libel by H.R.H., but nothing of the sort was attempted. The only interesting social result of Sir William's speech was that he received an invitation from the Duchess of Kent to a party at Kensington Palace; "I suppose," writes Sir William, "in consequence of my proposing to transport her brother-in-law." In a letter to his sister Elizabeth (the last in the Pencarrow collection) before her death, he describes the party:—

On Saturday I went to the Dutchess of Kent's, where I met my friend the Duke of C[umberland], to whom I think I was pointed out, as he looked like the devil at me, and I laughed. O'Connell says that a friend present told him there was no danger to the Princess Victoria from His Royal Highness, for there was I with my glass in my eye standing before him and Hume behind him, so all was safe! I went with Grote, and there was a strange mixture of Rads, Whigs, and Tories. Grote, Pattison, Crawford, Bannerman, and myself placed ourselves for some time near the entrance to see the people coming in and going out, and it was excessively funny to see the stares of astonishment of the Tories in finding us there in force. We were presented to the Dutchess of Kent, Princess Victoria, and Prince Ferdinand, but the crowd was so great we could hardly get a glimpse—the latter seems quite a boy.

Thus ended the great House of Commons fight on the question of the Orange Lodges, in a characteristically English fashion, by the chief antagonists meeting as fellow-guests at an evening party.

Sir William Molesworth's only other important speech in the House in the session of 1836 was one on 11th March on Army Reform, in which he attacked the exclusive privileges enjoyed by the Guards. As is usual in similar circumstances, he received numerous private letters from officers in the army, to say he was perfectly right : but little or no public support. In the course of the debate he was attacked by an honourable member, Sir H. Hardinge, for having borrowed his arguments from the pages of *The London Review*. His rejoinder was complete ; no one in the House had a better right to quote the article, for he himself had written it, and the *Review* in which it appeared was his property. The House laughed most heartily at this reply, especially when Molesworth requested Hardinge to buy the *Review*. Sir William was not half a Scotchman for nothing, and he hoped the incident would serve to increase the circulation of *The London Review*.

Sir William Napier wrote to Roebuck in March 1836, bestowing high praise on Molesworth's speech about the Guards : "The declaration that there is no jealousy of them entertained by the Line is absolutely laughable. Let them put it to a *vote by ballot*, and I will venture to say there will not be one white bean in a hundred for retaining them on their present footing."

CHAPTER VI

FAMILY AFFAIRS—1836

THE affectionate intimacy between Sir William Molesworth and the members of his immediate family has been sufficiently indicated by the letters already quoted. Seldom has a young man entering upon social and political activity written with more entire unreserve to his home circle. They shared, and he wished them to share, in everything that he was doing and thinking. As a son, his letters to Lady Molesworth speak for themselves ; as a brother, he was not only full of affection and a thoroughly charming companion and friend, he was also very alive to his responsibilities as the head of the family, and was keenly desirous to do whatever was just and generous for its younger members, both educationally and financially. He was as much father as brother in his relations with the youngest member of the family, Francis Molesworth. He writes constantly and anxiously

to his mother, and also to Mrs. Austin and Mrs. Grote, about Francis's education, which was carried out mainly in Germany. For a time he thought that Francis would take to politics, and that he (Sir William) would retire in his favour. In 1836 he planned and carried out a German tour with Francis, and he writes to Mrs. Grote a warm appreciation of the lad, then about eighteen years old :—

My youngest brother, whom you saw at Offenbach, is with me. He is an excessively fine boy, and speaks German like a German. He will fill my shoes well, for I feel that my career will be a short one. . . . I like the system I have pursued in educating Francis abroad ; it gives him an independent feeling and self-reliance which is most valuable.

A little earlier he had written, also to Mrs. Grote, about his projected tour with Francis :—

My brother and I are going to read Greek together on the outside of the carriage, and we have got a brace of Thucydides in order to study history.

The allusion to the possibility of Francis taking his elder brother's place in politics was evidently more than the expression of a passing impulse ; for one of the members of the Parliamentary group to which Grote and Molesworth belonged, Mr. Henry Warburton, M.P., wrote a serious remonstrance to Mrs. Grote about it :—

There is an absurd morbid feeling about him as being for this world for but a short period, and speaking of his brother as a "promising successor." What is this language in the mouth of a young fellow in the flower of youth? He must have been courting and disappointed in love, or he would never talk after this fashion.

Mr. Warburton was not very far wrong; but 1836 was a year which brought heavy sorrow to Sir William over and above what he may have suffered from the rejection of his suit by the family of the lady he loved. On 4th May 1836, his dearly loved sister Elizabeth died at Pencarrow. Her name is still spoken of there as "my beautiful sister Elizabeth." She and her brother had been all in all to each other since they were both babies. She shared in most of his studies, and took the keenest interest in his political work. There are frequent references in his letters of 1835 and the first four months of 1836 to her illness. This may possibly have originated with influenza, of which there was a severe outbreak in 1834-35. Sir William writes to his mother in 1834:—

The influenza has attacked every one. Hume and Althorpe were very ill; O'Connell, Trelawney, and the majority of the Committee upon which they were, took to their beds. . . . Every family I know has been ill, servants and all. At the opera last Saturday, Taglioni, the two Eslers, and four or five of the male dancers were

not able to perform. Never was any pestilence so universal. I am glad to find that Elizabeth is able to go out on the pony. Harris writes me a very favourable account of her, and that she is an out-and-out politician.

In January 1836 he writes that he is glad to hear that Elizabeth is better; but in April his letters manifest poignant anxiety; she is worse, and the prospect of recovery is becoming faint. Early in May he was summoned to come at once to Pencarrow. He came, but in those days of no telegraph and no railways he was not in time to see her alive. He arrived at Pencarrow on May 5th only to find that she had died the day before. It was the first overmastering sorrow of his life. Young people have but a faint belief in the reality of death till he presents himself in very deed and truth, and forces an unwilling homage. Molesworth wrote to pour out his anguish to Mrs. Grote:—

May 6, 1836.

MY DEAR MRS. GROTE—I write to you as you are one who can and will sympathise with me without uttering that conventional jargon of sorrow which to me is disgusting and makes me savage to listen to. I arrived here last night; my sister had ceased to breathe the middle of the day before. She died quietly from the effusion of the water on the brain; calm and collected, though frequently in torture; without a murmur; well aware for some time that death was approaching, she never expressed a fear nor an apprehension, and longed for

dissolution as the tranquil sleep from agony. One single thought filled her mind, and that was of me and what I was doing. Even her delirium consisted in a fancy that she was going to hear me speak ; and her anxiety was to hear what I said. Not once did she express a wish for me to be near her. She knew I could not leave town with honour,¹ and her entreaties to her mother were to conceal the extent of her danger lest I might be tempted to bring myself into trouble on her account ; all proved that she loved me with an intense affection which I felt in return for her ; others may love me as well, but no one can ever feel with me like her, for she alone could appreciate my sentiments and opinions. She shared in all the good and bad qualities of my temper and character. I had educated her and well, for in mental resources she found a resource in long years of suffering. . . . I feel this blow more than I can express, more than I should like any one to know except yourself. The only tie of really strong affection is broken asunder. I had hoped that we never should have been separated. I looked forward to her rejoicing in my renown and glorying in my honour. Her last consolations were the praises which I have in some slight degree earned this year, though to her they seemed not adequate. I feel paralysed for the present. . . . Do write to me. I have one more trial to undergo, the horror of which to me is inconceivable to you—that of seeing her consigned to a cold damp vault and of hearing the burial service read over her, and bearing a part in that hideous mummary. I would give

¹ On 25th April 1836 Lord Morpeth brought forward the Irish tithe measure, which would have had the effect, if passed, of devoting the surplus funds of the English Church in Ireland to the religious and moral instruction of all classes in Ireland without distinction of creed.

anything to bury her in a favourite spot in my grounds, under the clear sky, and erect a tomb for myself alongside of her. The baneful and noxious aspect of my ancestral tomb creates in me a loathing which I cannot understand. For myself I will force my heirs under enormous penalties to bury me in this manner. Would that I could devise any means to place her there too. I am afraid there are none. I can write no more.—Believe me, dear Mrs. Grote, yours ever sincerely grateful,

WILLIAM MOLESWORTH.

The revolt which young Molesworth so passionately expressed against the mummeries of funeral ceremonies was more generally felt than he perhaps at that time realised, for by nearly universal consent a great change has taken place in the direction of greater simplicity. We now feel that we honour the dead, and act more harmoniously with the feelings of the living, by abandoning a great part of the trappings and the suits of woe that characterised funeral ceremonies three-quarters of a century ago. In this, as in so many other things, Molesworth was before his time. His outburst against the burial service will grate harshly on the ears of some readers. Let not those who hear in that service only the words of peace and dignified consolation, speak or think harshly of those less fortunate in this respect than themselves. Huxley, overwhelmed by the greatest sorrow of his life, standing by the open

grave of his first-born child, was revolted by the words, "What advantageth it me if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die," interpreting them to mean that man's main and perhaps only inducement to lead a life other than one of animal indulgence is to be found in the hope of the resurrection. And he felt that the words relaxed the stimulus to a life of strenuous, unselfish effort at the very moment when the mourners most needed help and encouragement to take up the burden of everyday duty again. Matthew Arnold's sonnet, "The Better Part," strikes a nobler note—

Hath man no second life? Pitch this one high.

It can hardly be doubted, too, that to a man of Sir William Molesworth's temperament it was nothing less than revolting to stand at the grave of his beautiful and gifted young sister and give hearty thanks to the Almighty that it had pleased him to deliver her out of the miseries of this world. It is one thing to bear calamity with courage, and another to pretend that bad is good, and that bitter anguish is a source of joy and thankfulness.

In judging of Sir William Molesworth's attitude on religious questions, no one should fail to bear in mind the evolution in religious thought which has taken place since 1836. At that time, any one who was not certain that he held the key

to all the greatest mysteries of life and death was condemned as an infidel or an atheist. Now we accept as a commonplace the lines of Tennyson :—

There is more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.

What religion was among the Clapham sect early in the nineteenth century, has been portrayed in a lively fashion by Thackeray in describing the childhood of Colonel Newcome. What religion was by law may be gathered from the fact that by an Act of William and Mary, unrepealed as late as 1823, it was enacted that for the offence of denying the Trinity a man was subjected to a fine for the first offence ; for the second offence he was fined and imprisoned ; while for the third offence the punishment was death. Serious people carefully avoided for themselves or their children all amusements, however innocent. A very large part of the religion of that epoch consisted in a belief in hell fire,¹ and it was held to be necessary to salvation to believe that an All-Merciful God would consign the vast majority of His creatures,

¹ If any reader is inclined to doubt this statement, he is invited to refer to *Divine and Moral Songs for Children*, by the Rev. Isaac Watts, D.D. Dr. Watts died about half a century before Molesworth was born, but his hymns held the field of popular theology well into the middle of the nineteenth century. Two specimens may here be quoted :—

“There is a dreadful Hell
And everlasting pains,
There sinners must with devils dwell
In darkness, fire, and chains.”

including unbaptized infants, to its torments for ever and ever. Every one who could not believe this, and at the same time apply to the Deity every epithet of reverence and adoration, was considered and called an atheist. Molesworth's friend, John Mill, was a leader in the revolt against this devil-worship which went by the name of religion. The celebrated passage in Mill's *Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, though written later than the period now under review, is illustrative of the struggle then being made by some of the wisest and best men in England to relieve their countrymen from the incubus of the popular eschatology of the day. "I will call no being good who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow-creatures; and if such a being can sentence me to hell for not so calling him, to hell I will go." John Mill's views were expressed in the pages of the *London* and the *London and Westminster Review*, and Molesworth's open sympathy with them as well as his ownership of the *Review* completely identified him with them. They cost him his seat in East Cornwall, and put an insuperable bar to

or again—

" 'Tis dangerous to provoke a God!
 His power and vengeance none can tell;
 The stroke of his almighty rod
 Shall send young sinners quick to Hell."

Sensitive people, when this theology was offered them, could either believe and go mad, like Cowper, or disbelieve and mock, like Molesworth.

the fulfilment of his dearest hopes with regard to his marriage. It is true that he never allowed himself to be called an atheist without contradiction, and in one of his letters to Mrs. Grote he says he is going to prosecute a Newcastle¹ paper for saying that he was "a wretch without a God"; but in such cases the denial of the person most interested is *ex hypothesi* worthless, and produces no effect whatever on the accusers. Before the end of his life, in an able speech on the Clergy Reserves in Canada in 1853, he said that he preferred the doctrines and discipline of the Church of England to those of any other religious denomination.

Sir William wrote with his usual frankness to his mother and sister about his disappointment in love. The lady whom he wished to marry was young, of his own station in life, the daughter of one of his neighbours in Cornwall. He was at first cordially received by her family as well as by the lady herself. Then an insuperable difficulty was raised, that he was "a Radical in politics and an infidel in religion." In vain Molesworth invited the closest scrutiny into his character and conduct. Character and conduct were held to have no relation to religion. He was ordered to relinquish his opinions or to give

¹ There was some prospect of his offering himself as a Parliamentary candidate for Newcastle about 1836.

up his hopes of a happy marriage. He was naturally in a fever of rage, but upon points of principle he was inflexible. "I have softened down my opinions," he writes, "to the verge of falsehood, but that barrier I will not pass." The ^ustruggle lasted over the two years, 1834-36, when the lady was finally lost to him by her marrying another suitor. I am informed, however, that to the end of her life her family knew that if left to herself she would have given a very different answer to the rejected lover. How much happier it would have been for him if the lady had had the courage to choose for herself, and had acted on the obvious truism that the people chiefly concerned in a marriage are the bride and bridegroom. If they are pleased, the sanction of the rest of humanity can at a pinch be dispensed with. But women's rights had not made enough progress in the thirties to enable any women but those who were courageous to the verge of recklessness thus to take their destiny into their own keeping.

It would be idle to attempt to conceal that Molesworth was bitterly mortified by his refusal; for he did not nurse his woes in silence. In this, as in most other circumstances of his life, he openly proclaimed what he was feeling, and invited the sympathy of his friends. The consolation offered by Roebuck was to read his friend [^]an admirable lecture, "which proved most clearly

that love was only an inflammation of the brain." It is not clear how much benefit he derived from this dissertation ; probably more relief was obtained from giving free play to his fighting instinct ; for his friends spoke of him invariably being "in great glee whenever he hopes for a row." He also plunged with renewed ardour into the study of philosophy. "You ask what I am about ? Studying Epicurus, reading everything I can find in innumerable authors with regard to him. Object I have in view is the history of philosophy in the time of Thomas Hobbes."

From Mrs. Grote's memoir it appears that a little later there was a chance of another marriage, which also came to nothing, for the same reasons which had destroyed his hopes of success in his first suit ; but his heart was not so much in this second suit as it had been in the first. He writes to Mrs. Grote that he is convinced that Miss X. [lady No. 2] had never cared for him.

Otherwise I should have to reproach myself with doing what I trust I have never done, and never will do, viz. playing with a young woman's affections. . . . Though I should not wish to be thought ill of by her, I wish never to be present to her mind, more especially if any feelings of liking ever did exist, and romance keeps that accursed sentiment alive which has made such a fool of me, I hope for the last time.

Writing in September 1837 to his sister Mary

after his election for Leeds, the whole of the expenses of which had been defrayed by the constituency, Sir William says, referring to an election contest at Bodmin :—

Having no election [expenses] of my own I can afford something to the good cause, as they [the Whigs] shall know. . . . Providence has ordained two things with regard to me ; first, that I shall always be in hot water, and secondly, that I shall have no incumbrances to distract me from public duties. God be praised. Amen.

As the subject of Molesworth's views on marriage has been mentioned, it may be convenient to quote here another letter written several years later to his sister Mary, in 1844, after his own marriage, which indicates that his opinions on one of the most important of social questions were more in accordance with what is even now considered the advanced school than with those popularly entertained in his own time :—

Is it the pretty Miss Y. Q. [he wrote] who is going to be married to Lord L. ? How happy Lady Y. Q. must be in getting so admirable a match for her daughter. How lucky ! that sweet girl ! Her husband will be a marquis, and is one of the lowest debauchees and most depraved men about town.

CHAPTER VII

DECLINE OF PHILOSOPHIC RADICALISM

IT has been seen that the year 1836 was a gloomy one for Sir William Molesworth. All through his life up to that year he had had nearly everything the heart of man could desire except good health. In 1836 he lost his sister by death; he was obliged finally to relinquish the hope of marrying the woman he loved; he had likewise to face the fact that it would be impossible for him again to carry the constituency of East Cornwall. This was not made the pleasanter by the fact that his constituency was also his home, and the alienated supporters his neighbours and personal friends. But as if to prove up to the hilt the truth of the saying that when troubles come they come not singly but in battalions, to all these disasters was added another: his health, always fragile, completely broke down, and he had a sharp attack of dangerous illness which compelled him to absent

himself for a time from all political and other occupations. This was in the early part of the summer. When the crisis of the illness was over it was necessary for him to seek complete rest, and he left England for Germany (July), accompanied by Lady Molesworth and his only remaining sister, Mary. They joined Mr. Francis Molesworth at Frankfort, and went on together to Prague and later to Berlin.

He had left his political affairs mainly in the hands of his friend Charles Buller. He had, however, before leaving England, arrived at the important decision of announcing to the electors of East Cornwall that it was not his intention to ask them to return him again. He wrote his retiring address in haste, just before starting for the continent, and left it with Buller to correct and to issue or not according to the advice given by his friends. It was issued on the 7th September 1836. The reasons which influenced him in retiring from Cornwall were that his Radical views and his open expression of them had alienated the support of the Whigs in the constituency; and in the absence of the ballot the Whigs commanded a great deal more electoral strength than their actual numbers would justify. Sir William's advocacy of Free Trade was tolerated by the Whigs as long as the fortress of Protection appeared to be impregnable; but as soon as the abolition of

the Corn Laws approached the region of practical politics many of his former supporters began to fall away; those of them who wished to be as little unfriendly as possible began to tell him what an excellent member he would make for some other constituency, that he had not enough regard for the agricultural interest, and so forth. Then he was credited, or, in the eyes of the Whigs, discredited, with everything that appeared in the pages of *The London and Westminster Review*.

I knew [he wrote] that the *Review* would lose me my seat, and it was the first pretext against me. I was called upon to deny certain opinions in one of John's [J. S. Mill's] political articles. I refused to do so, and the leader of the Whigs, Sir Colman Rashleigh, immediately wrote to me that he would not support me.

Buller suggested sweeping alterations in the retiring address. He urged the necessity of compression and of moderation. He wrote:—

As you have no right to attack on the present occasion any but the Cornish Whigs, all attacks on Whigs in general must be struck out.

The final outcome was a manly and dignified document, quite sufficiently outspoken to be characteristic of the signature at its foot. Sir William reiterated the chief points of his own political creed: the ballot, free trade, national education, reform of the House of Lords, religious equality,

household suffrage, and better government for Ireland. By supporting measures with these ends in view he had alienated, he said, many of the most powerful of his original supporters, and he must in any future contest, therefore, expect their hostility rather than their aid. Under these circumstances he believed his candidature would on his own part be a useless expenditure of money, and would also endanger the seat of his colleague. He therefore intimates his intention of retiring; in conclusion he advises the voters, not as their member but as a brother elector, to make the ballot a test question.

That question is now the test of Liberal principles. He mocks you who talks of Freedom of Election, and at the same time refuses to protect you by secret suffrage. He neither deserves the name of a Liberal, nor the support of Liberals, who will consent to leave you at the mercy of your landlord when so easy a remedy can be obtained.

The notion of retiring altogether from political life, though it had attractions to one of studious habits who was also so enthusiastic a horticulturist and lover of trees, was dispelled as he regained his normal measure of health. In September 1836 he wrote to Mrs. Grote from Prague :—

Now with regard to the rest of your letter, I think you are wrong in accusing me of an absolute wish to shrink from the combat; on the contrary, I stated my

anxious hope of being of service to the cause through *The London*, and as long as that Review is carried on with energy you cannot accuse me of deserting the party. I did certainly indulge in a feeling of pleasure at the idea of being once again free from the trammels of Parliament, and sought out reasons for justifying this feeling in your eyes; but, in truth, I will do exactly as you like, for you are the only person who is invariably kind to me whenever I commit follies or errors, and whose reproofs even sound to me more pleasing than the praises of others. I will come into Parliament again if you wish it, and if I can get a constituency that will take me with a clear declaration of my opinions. I am glad that I am free from Cornwall, for I was in a most painful position there, with hardly a gentleman to support me.

Accordingly, as soon as Sir William returned to England he threw himself with characteristic energy and thoroughness into the business of finding another constituency. That he did not do this in a perfunctory spirit is proved by the following letter, which is preserved among the Pencarrow MSS. It is from a brother M.P., Mr. Ward, who was also looking for a new constituency and complains that, go where he will, Molesworth has forestalled him :—

Nov. 23, 1836.

MY DEAR MOLESWORTH—You are by far the greatest borough monger or borough monopoliser now in existence. Go where you will, North, South, East, or West, one is sure to fall in with you. I had a very snug settlement in Westminster, but Sir Wm. Molesworth has

ousted me! I was talked of once with some favour at Newcastle, but Sir Wm. Molesworth has got a requisition in his pocket from all my quondam well-wishers! I might seek refuge in Leeds, but Sir Wm. Molesworth's name again stares me in the face! Now I want much to know where you fix yourself, and more particularly what you intend to do about Newcastle, where I think I might have a very fair prospect of establishing myself comfortably. Of course, however, I do not dream of this until I have clearly ascertained your decision, etc., etc.

Leeds was finally decided on, but before following the fortunes of Sir William in that constituency it will be necessary to refer to the causes which had brought about something very nearly resembling the annihilation of the Radical party of which Sir William had had such strong hopes eighteen months earlier.

The Reform Bill of 1832 had been carried on a wave of national feeling so high that a great number of intelligent observers looked upon it as the preliminary symptom of a revolution. The supporters and the opponents of reform were alike mistaken in their forecast of its results. The Reformers expected that the unquestionable improvement which the Reform Bill had accomplished in the Representative system of the country would bring about a new Heaven and a new Earth.¹

¹ In anticipation of the passing of the Reform Bill men had paraded the streets carrying a black flag inscribed, "Put not your trust in Princes," and

Their opponents thought all the glories of England would disappear with scot and lot, pot-wallopers, and constituencies without inhabitants like Gattton and Old Sarum. Neither expectation was fulfilled. We can see now the immense importance of the change that had been effected ; but its immediate consequences were disappointing ; things seemed to go on much the same as they did before. The Radicals blamed one another for this. They felt that their party was without effective leadership. John Mill in an article in the *London and Westminster* of October 1835 declared that the one thing needful for the party in Parliament was a leader. He complained bitterly of the absence of a man of action, and asked, "Why does not Mr. Grote exert himself? There is not a man in Parliament who *could* do so much or who is more thoroughly the people's friend."¹ Place declared that there was not a man in the Radical party with the exception of Madame Grote.

Place wrote to Falconer, September 1836 :—

It is a somewhat curious circumstance that Madame

a crown stuffed with straw labelled "Ichabod"—the glory has departed. So eminently sane and enlightened a man as Dr. Arnold wrote in 1831 ; "My sense of the evil of the times and to what I am bringing up my children is overwhelmingly bitter. All the moral and physical world appears so exactly to announce the coming of the great day of the Lord, *i.e.* a period of fearful visitation, to terminate the existing state of things—whether to terminate the whole existence of the human race, neither man nor angel knows."

¹ P. 47, *John Stuart Mill*, by Alexander Bain, LL.D.

Grote should scold at Molesworth and talk of a band of heroes ; where she found one of them I cannot tell. *She*, yes *she* was the only member of Parliament with whom I had any intercourse in the later third of the session. We communicated freely, but we could find no heroes—no, no decent legislators. We found that the supineness and truckling of the so-called Radicals in the House of Commons were the cause of what is called the apathy of the people, and sure I am that in our hearts we both wished the Reformers should be well cart-whipped, and that the Whigs and Tories were dead and damned. . . .

P.S.—I think you may as well send this letter to Molesworth.

Molesworth's impatience in regard to Grote's inactivity is evident from phrases already quoted ; for instance when he says that Hume was worth a hundred of "your do-nothing gents," or that Grote had postponed his motion on the ballot and "ought to be hanged for it." The same feeling is indicated by Buller's references to Grote. In the modern phrase it was evident that whatever his virtues and excellencies as a scholar and a politician, Grote was not a man to go tiger-shooting with. It fell to Sir William Molesworth's lot to express what many were feeling to those whom it most concerned, and he complained openly to Mrs. Grote that her husband left him in the lurch and did not give him the practical personal support which he had a right to expect. The cry of the moment among the Whigs was for "Union among

Reformers” ; this meant that the Radical lamb should lie down inside the Whig lion, and Sir William wrote in *The London and Westminster Review* an article in which, as he said privately, he “tore to pieces this accursed cry.” Extracts from letters written by Sir William to Mrs. Grote in the autumn of 1836 illustrate his attitude and the resentment which he was feeling at Grote’s incapacity to take a strong line as leader of the Radical party. The first of these letters was written on 24th October 1836, from Berlin, where he was staying with his brother Francis, then a student of the Berlin University.

Pray use your influence with our friends not again to raise the cry of “Union amongst Reformers.” So far from its producing union, it will produce disunion as destroying all unity of purpose. Ballot, triennial parliaments, extension of the suffrage, and reform of the House of Lords are the only means by which the quiet progress of reform can be secured. To call upon us to support equally men who reject these measures is to command us to elect men who will be against us in the day of difficulty. It is better to have a smaller body of reformers who will boldly advocate these measures than a larger body of pseudo-reformers, a still smaller body of whom will act. The cry of union among reformers can never again be raised with success. The people are indifferent to these things, and the Radicals in the House by their timidity are losing their hold over the nation. By acting boldly without reference to the existence or

non-existence of the Ministry they will regain their influence and rally round them a party which will be irresistible. Pray stir them up. See Rintoul.¹ I read one of his articles in which he talked of the Tories being in before Easter ; most likely, and no harm will result ; it will make our men determined ; destroy the Whig party by dividing it into Whigs and Radicals. Consider ! the Whigs won't take the only means of doing anything. The Tories won't do anything. What is gained or lost by the one or the other in power ? Apathy and timidity with the Whigs. Courage and the energies of the people incited and developing in opposition. . . . There can be no doubt about the alternative. . . . Now is the time. Oh for some respectable man of action ! Oh for a good newspaper ! Both are behind the times and are vainly attempting to blow an expiring spark into a flame instead of seeking for new materials and new principles of combustion. When the enthusiasm of the people is dying out upon a particular subject, never attempt to excite it again, for you are sure to fail. You perhaps may think me wild, but having been out of the political world for some months, I am cooler and less prejudiced than those who are heated by the events around them. When we meet, however, I expect to hear the feelings of our leaders. We ought to assemble to see if we can devise any line of policy ; or are we to continue aimless and purposeless doing nothing ? I wish I were ten years older, and a ready and fluent orator.

Pray write me a line to the Reform Club. . . . I hope to be in town on the 29th, as I shall leave Hamburg on the 26th at two o'clock in the morning. I will dine with

¹ Editor of the *Spectator*.

you on Monday the 30th. Ask some Rads. to meet me, honest men and true. Six is your hour?—Yours sincerely,
WM. MOLESWORTH.

The second letter is dated 15th December 1836, and shows that his dissatisfaction with the lack of support extended to him by the Grotes had been intensified since the date of the previous letter. The MS. is annotated in Mrs. Grote's hand, "Sir W. M. complains of want of support from us" :—

Dec. 15, 1836.

DEAR MRS. GROTE—I am sorry that you are sorry, and that I should have said anything to *grieve* you. I intended to make you angry: my letter may be divided into two parts, one which refers to you as Mrs. Grote, the other as an influential member of the Radical party. . . . With regard to politics I have said nothing which I do not conscientiously think, though I may have expressed it rather harshly; for this harshness I am sorry. I commissioned Falconer and Roebuck to ask of you all a question of importance. The answer which I got proved to me that you were all dreaming. You say my political conduct is correct: you must know that the most earnest admonitions have been made to me not to do as I have done, because I should be left in the lurch by you all. I said and again repeat that those amongst you who ought to take the lead won't stir. For instance, in the Political Tract Society, Hume writes to inform me that I am to be a member of it instead of Grote. Why not both? You see how the Whigs are attacking me, the Irish will be furious with me. You say *you* are with

me, but will one of you stir hand or foot to make public that approbation? A declaration of a public description from one or two of you would further the cause amazingly and carry half the battle, yet will one of you enter the arena now? If so, in the second week in January there is to be a dinner at Bath. Roebuck, Leader, Napier, and myself attend, thence I go to Leeds. It is of immense importance to me personally, second to the cause, that I should appear supported by Radicals of maturer weight and consideration. Will Grote come to that meeting at Bath? If he approves of my conduct and fears not publicly to sanction me he will. So far for politics. The weather has been the worst I ever knew. I have not been out of the house for the last week. To-morrow I go to Totnes, thence for a few days to Pencarrow. Have you seen anything of John Mill? How is he looking?—Believe me, dear Mrs. Grote, yours most sincerely and truly,

WM. MOLESWORTH.

Grote did not go to the Bath dinner, and did not take any other means of giving Molesworth the public support he asked for. Grote did not even accede to Molesworth's request to write for the *London and Westminster Review*. Professor Bain quotes a letter from Mrs. Grote to Roebuck dated April 1837:—

Molesworth wrote a flippant letter in mighty bad taste about our ceasing to write for the *L. and W.*, affecting despair, etc. Now I merely wrote to John, by G.'s desire, a simple refusal to furnish an article on Greek History. M. chuses to book it as a piece of party feeling, etc.

Place wrote to Roebuck in the same month (December 1836) to urge that he and Molesworth should take an independent line which should induce the Radicals throughout the country to look on them as men on whom they could rely as leaders. A month later, January 1837, Place wrote again¹:—"I have had a long but amicable dispute with Madame Grote. She is by far the best of the party, but she is so surrounded by dawdlers that her own strong understanding gives way, and she is blinded to the fact that to compromise, as she calls it, is to submit." In a letter from Roebuck to his wife, he attributes a personal motive to Mrs. Grote in keeping her husband back from publicly associating himself with Molesworth, but there is no proof that the accusation was well founded. Grote was much more fitted for the part of a student and scholar than he was for that of a party leader. But this charitable explanation of Grote's timidity did not commend itself to Roebuck.

"You are quite right," he writes to Mrs. Roebuck in January 1837, "as to Mrs. Grote; she is and will be for ever jealous of everybody who puts Grote into the shade. She ought in truth to be jealous of Grote, for he himself causes his own eclipse. If he would *do* anything, his reward in praise and esteem would be boundless."

¹ *Leader's Life of Roebuck.*

At the Bath dinner Molesworth spoke in a very Radical strain, attacking the Whig Government, and reiterating his support of the ballot, household suffrage, and army reform, and his opposition to the Corn Laws, the Irish Church and University Tests. He was in consequence practically sent to Coventry by the party whips, and was not invited to the grand Liberal dinner held at Drury Lane Theatre at the beginning of the session of 1837. The failing health of William IV. made a General Election within a few months a practical certainty, and the Whigs would have been very pleased to see Molesworth excluded from the new Parliament. The Radical party dwindled more and more, the greater number of the Radicals being absorbed into that of the Whigs. Mrs. Grote wrote in her Notes, "Mr. Grote and about five others find themselves left to sustain the Radical opinions of the House of Commons, the Whigs becoming more and more 'conservative,' relying upon the Irish to keep them in office." Mr. J. S. Mill, writing in calm review of the circumstances in after-years, said that he felt that too much had been expected of the Radicals in Parliament in the years immediately following the passing of the Reform Bill; that their lot was cast in a period of inevitable reaction when the public mind desired rest rather than a rapid progress with a reform programme. But the disappoint-

ment at the time was extreme, and was expressed with considerable acerbity. The discomfiture of the Radical party was intensified by the flood of loyal enthusiasm which greeted the accession of the young Queen in 1837. When Macaulay returned from India in 1839 he said he found the Radical party reduced to "Grote and his wife." This was not exactly true, but was true enough for an epigram.

Before the end of 1836 negotiations were on foot with a view to Sir William being adopted as the Liberal candidate for Leeds, and on the 2nd January 1837, at a public meeting of the electors, a resolution was carried with great enthusiasm, choosing Mr. Edward Baines and Sir William Molesworth as candidates for the borough in the event of a dissolution. The resolution was a very long one, and referred more than once to the "bounden duty" of all Liberals to support the Liberal Ministry; the candidates named were commended on the ground that they could be relied on "carefully to support our Reforming Administration." Sir William's uncompromising honesty comes out in his reply, addressed to the chairman of the meeting. He plunged at once into the thorny question of his attitude towards the Whig Government.

With reference to my support of the present Administration, I beg leave to inform you that undoubtedly I

should support their measures if I approve of them. If, however, they do not make the Ballot and other measures open questions, my firm belief is that their tenure of office will be short. In case of their not assenting to open questions, I consider it would be the duty of the Radical party to steadily pursue an *independent* line of policy, whatever the consequences may be. . . . If by supporting Ministers you mean that I will support them in opposition to the Tories—undoubtedly I will. If you mean that I must abstain from expressing my opinions in speeches, motions, or by amendments, through fear of *indirectly* destroying the present Administration,—then I must tell you I will not give that species of support. . . . If it be in any way intended to bind me in my future conduct to pursue a course different from that which I have stated my intention of following, I must protest against the attempt and assure you that I will consent to no compromise of any kind. Till I receive such an explanation, I cannot accept the invitation.

While the negotiations which followed the despatch of this letter were pending, he thought that the frank expression of his views would probably put an end to the chance of his being accepted as a candidate. His expression in a private letter is, “Leeds won’t do. Too many Whigs there.” However, Leeds did do. Another meeting was called, under another chairman, on 20th January 1837, and it was agreed to accept Sir William Molesworth’s candidature on his own terms, and the resolution, which was passed, with fifty or sixty dissentients, expressly stated that the

meeting entirely disclaimed the intention or the wish to restrain him from the full expression of his political opinions either by speech or vote in the House of Commons. With this resolution Sir William expressed his entire satisfaction, and he proceeded as soon as possible to visit Leeds, and in the meantime he laid before the constituency copies of his speeches and articles on political subjects, so that the voters could obtain an accurate knowledge of the past conduct of the man who was about to ask for their suffrages. His first visit to Leeds was in March 1837. He was accompanied by his brother Arscott, and by his agent Mr. Woollcombe, whose letters to Lady Molesworth describing her son's reception afford a curious illustration of the distance between Yorkshire and Cornwall in the days before railways. He describes Leeds much in the same way as a traveller might now describe Moscow or Teheran.

LEEDS, *March 27, 1837.*

MY DEAR MADAM—As you will be anxious to hear how we get on, I have set apart an hour before the dinner [a public function at which Sir Wm. was to speak] for an epistle to you. I am happy to say that Sir Wm. has borne his journey exceedingly well and seems better for it. He does not cough at all. We arrived last night at Pomfret, and this morning were waited on by a deputation of would-be constituents—the dirtiest-looking dogs you ever beheld, but they say all mighty rich.

Then follow some remarks intended to be humorous about their all returning with rich and smoke-dried wives. The description of the Leeds ladies sounds like that of Esquimaux.

Leeds itself [says Mr. Woollcombe] is anything but a handsome place. It is, if possible, twenty times blacker than the blackest parts of London. On our arrival here we went to the Cloth Hall, where the Baronet addressed about 15,000 men with effect, was well heard and applauded. We then adjourned to the hotel, and I commenced my studies, which are to report on the prospect of success, and to advise the course to be pursued.

The election consequent on Queen Victoria's accession took place in July 1837, and was a complete triumph for Sir William. Woollcombe writes in high spirits to Lady Molesworth; his first letter is about the nomination.

LEEDS, *July 27, 1837.*

DEAR LADY MOLESWORTH—I snatch a moment to tell you we have had a most triumphant reception to-day at the nomination. The show of hands, Baines and Molesworth. The sight almost worth being beaten to see; fully 70,000 persons present. The Baronet (ours) fully prepared to smash the Tory Baronet, but could not get a hearing. The Blues were evidently *afraid* that the *Boy* would thrash the man, which he would have done most properly. I am quite as sanguine as ever, and all is well, though the bullying is perfectly terrible. Excuse this hasty scrawl, but I know you would rather

hear what I can write than nothing. Ellis will, I fear,
be beat for Bodmin.—Ever yours,

THOS. WOOLLCOMBE.

The next letter begins by describing Sir William's triumph on the polling day, and the generous hospitality of Leeds to its new member, and continues :—

We left Leeds after the chairing (during which the members were favoured with one stone and three red herrings only) for Manchester *viâ* Huddersfield, at the last stage from whence the innkeeper recognised us and coolly said, "Gentlemen, I advise you not to say who you are on your arrival, or you will probably get killed by Oastler's men." However, on we went, were soon recognised, and such a scene ensued as only Cruikshank could do justice to. We were very popular, however, and glasses of brandy and water were proffered in abundance. They insisted on a speech, which, when the horses were to, the Baronet gave them, and such an effusion of Radicalism you never heard. Nothing Sir Francis Burdett ever said came the least near it. It took beautifully, however, and we were permitted to depart with sound heads amidst the enthusiastic cheers of the populace. No reporter was, I hope, present! The town was in a dreadful state: the military galloping in all directions, and had we remained ten minutes longer all would have been tumult. The scenes of violence in the North seem to have been quite unparalleled, and the loss of life has been serious. We came from Manchester to Birmingham on the Grand Junction Railway at the rate of 25 miles an hour. The

only pleasant part of the performance is the saving of time. The motion is disagreeable, as is the noise ; and on the whole I confidently predict that *our* steamers will bear the bell from the railways.

Mr. Woollcombe did not in this instance greatly distinguish himself as a prophet ; he lived to take an active part in promoting the South Devon Railway, and was for many years Chairman of its Board of Directors. The gift of prophecy is, however, fortunately no necessary part of the equipment of a good letter-writer, and Mr. Woollcombe's letters are among the most racy in the Pencarrow collections. Describing the excitement caused by the elections in Cornwall, he writes in the latter part of the letter just quoted : " E—— keeps tolerably sane, but talks like a water-mill after heavy floods of rain."

The rout of the Radicals in the General Election of 1837 has been referred to in a former chapter. Grote, indeed, retained his seat ; but from having been triumphantly returned at the head of the poll for the City of London in 1832, his first election, he now only crept in at the bottom with a miserable majority of six votes. Mrs. Grote wrote : " Everybody is 'consternated.' . . . Parkes is in the City looking horribly down, and croaking like an old hoarse crow." Grote's vexation, as we have seen, took the form of daily lamentations for the death of William IV. Hume had lost his seat.

It was not only the left wing, but the whole party, which was crushed by the election of 1837. The three successive General Elections of 1832, 1834-35, and 1837 reduced the majority of the Whigs first from 315 to 26, and then from 26 to 12.

Sir William had predicted that Radicalism would revive if the energies and courage of the people were developed by the party being in opposition. He therefore bore the imminent downfall of the Whigs with serenity. "Your political gloom," he wrote to Mrs. Grote in the autumn of 1837, "I don't share in. I think the Whigs miserable wretches, and shall rejoice when I hear their death-shriek . . . but I have a firm faith in the progress of the human mind and in the steady advance of democracy, and I don't believe the Whigs can keep us back." He was certainly, as he said, not a man to conciliate his adversaries by honeyed speech.

CHAPTER VIII

SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH AS A COLONIAL REFORMER—THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

FROM the time of his first entering Parliament, Sir William Molesworth bestowed a great deal of study and thought on the subject of the relation of the mother country to the Colonies. In 1830 the Colonisation Society had been founded mainly in consequence of the exertions of that extraordinary man, Edward Gibbon Wakefield, whose gamut of experience ranged from the life of an attaché to the British Embassies in Turin and Paris to that of a prisoner in Lancaster Castle. While he was watching the sky through prison bars, his mind not unnaturally dwelt upon the theory of punishment. He wrote two books from prison, one on the *Punishment of Death*, and one called *A Letter from Sydney*. The first seeks to show that punishments are deterrent in proportion to their certainty, not in proportion to their

severity. In the opinion of good judges the amelioration and humanisation of the English criminal law are to a large extent due to the power with which this is set forth. The second, *A Letter from Sydney*, written under the pseudonym of Robert Gouger, is practically an examination of the causes which had rendered the Australian Colonies useless to the mother country.¹ It was written with such force and with such a vivid realisation of an emigrant's position that no reader doubted for a moment that the author was an actual colonist.² It is said that when Wakefield was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in 1827, he thought that his own future must necessarily be passed in the Colonies, and in order the better to prepare himself for this he read carefully every book he could get relating to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, as well as a long series of Colonial newspapers. The *Letter from Sydney* contained as an appendix practically the whole of what was afterwards known as Wakefield's system of colonisation. The main features of this system were that the government of each colony should assume possession of all unoccupied land, and should gradually sell it in small lots at a fairly high price; that the fund thus brought into exist-

¹ *Edward Gibbon Wakefield*, by R. Garnett, C.B., LL.D.

² Robert Gouger was the name of an actual colonist, but Wakefield and not he wrote the *Letter from Sydney*.

ence should be used to promote emigration ; that emigrants should be carefully selected, a preference being given to the young ; that an equal number of both sexes should be sent out, and that the general body of emigrants should be representative of all classes and of a great variety of occupations. Immediately on coming out of prison Wakefield set to work to found, in 1830, the Colonisation Society, to carry these theories into practice. In his interesting book, already referred to, Dr. Garnett states that he has been unable to find out who were the original members of the Society, but he believes that Molesworth was among them. A further consideration of dates would probably convince Dr. Garnett that this was impossible. Sir William was in Italy during the whole of 1830 ; he was then only twenty years old, and had never lived in London or taken any part in public affairs. He probably joined the Colonisation Society in 1833,¹ during the first session of the Reformed Parliament. He certainly was a director of a company, called the South Australian Association, which was founded in 1834 as an outcome of the Colonisation

¹ Sir William's first important House of Commons speech on the state of the Colonies, delivered on 29th June 1838, affords evidence that his active co-operation with the Colonial Reformers began in 1833. In the course of that speech he said : " So long as nearly five years ago—a long period in a short life—I took an active part in the foundation of a colony (South Australia), in which I feel a deep interest on public grounds, and have proved it by incurring personal risk as a trustee responsible for the safety of considerable funds belonging to that colony."

Society. Mr. J. S. Mill, Buller, and Rintoul, editor of the *Spectator*, were keenly interested in the objects of the Society and of the Company. Wakefield was the moving spirit of both. In the words of Dr. Garnett, "Wakefield pulled every string, but his connection with the Company was not ostensible; at that period it would have been inexpedient to mention it." The Colonisation Society was sufficiently influential to obtain in 1836 the appointment of a Parliamentary Committee on Colonial Lands. This was part of Wakefield's scheme of educating Parliament, and through Parliament the Government and the country. He could never hope to educate Parliament directly through his own influence by becoming a member of it. His crime¹ and its punishment rendered his election an impossibility;² but he saw that Molesworth and Buller were

¹ Abducting an heiress; the marriage which followed was revoked by special Act of Parliament.

² Molesworth did not at one time, at all events, consider the difficulties of getting Wakefield into Parliament insuperable. Among the Pencarrow MSS. is a draft of an unfinished letter from Sir William to Lord Durham proposing to co-operate with him in finding a seat for Wakefield. Molesworth offers to contribute £1000 to Wakefield's election expenses and to extend to him every kind of personal support. The draft is undated, and there is no further evidence among the papers that anything was actually done to promote Wakefield's candidature. The practical electioneers of the party probably put their veto on the scheme. Molesworth was nothing if not courageous; and in his speech in the House of Commons on Colonial Lands, 27th June 1839, he refers to "my friend, Mr. Wakefield," and urges on the House the great merit due to him for setting forth a scientific system of colonisation.

the ablest of the young men in the House, as yet unabsorbed by party ambitions, and he set to work to educate them. His object was to set before the country a scientific system of colonisation instead of leaving things to the rule of thumb which had relegated emigration to haphazard and had weighted it with the awful incubus of transportation. This combination of insult and injury had already led to the disastrous failure of several attempted schemes of colonisation, *e.g.* that of the Swan River Settlement of Western Australia in 1828.

It may not be without interest to some readers to observe that nearly all the men who were active in promoting Colonial reform at this time were Scottish either by birth or education, or by both. Wakefield was wholly English by birth. He was an East Anglian and was related to Elizabeth Fry. But he had received part of his education at the Edinburgh High School. Buller and Molesworth had both been students of Edinburgh University, and Molesworth was besides Scottish on his mother's side. Rintoul was wholly Scottish; so was James Mill, and his son, J. S. Mill, was of course half Scottish by birth and wholly Scottish by the education which his father had given him.

Molesworth's correspondence from the year 1833 onwards gives frequent evidence of his study of Colonial questions. No sooner was he returned

as member for Leeds in the General Election following the Queen's accession, than on the assembling of Parliament he moved for, and succeeded in obtaining a Select Committee (24th Nov. 1837) "to inquire into the System of Transportation, its efficacy as a Punishment, its influence on the Moral State of Society in the Penal Colonies, and how far it is susceptible of improvement." The Committee consisted of Sir William Molesworth (chairman), Lord John Russell, Sir George Grey (not the Colonial statesman, but his namesake who was afterwards Home Secretary), Mr. Leader, Mr. Hawes, Mr. Ord, Lord Viscount Howick, Sir Thomas Fremantle, Mr. Francis Baring (Thetford), Sir Robert Peel, Mr. Charles Buller, Lord Viscount Ebrington, Sir Charles Lenox and Mr. French. It is significant of Molesworth's parliamentary position that he, at the age of twenty-seven, should have been made chairman of such a Committee. Before its appointment he was hard at work at Pencarrow on the subject of transportation, and the grasp of the subject which he showed in the speech, in which he moved for the appointment of the Committee, did not fail to impress the House of Commons. In April 1837 he had been in correspondence with Lord John Russell, who agreed to the appointment of the Committee and in consultation with Molesworth drew up a proposed list of its members. A letter

from Lord John, dated Wilton Crescent, 5th April 1837, permits Molesworth to quote him as having said that if allowed to continue, transportation would create "the most depraved community that ever existed in the world." The actual appointment of the Committee was postponed in consequence of the death of William IV. and the ensuing dissolution of Parliament. No one defends transportation now; but it is instructive to find what years of effort were needed, even after it had been fully proved to have every defect which can characterise a penal system, before it was finally abolished. Sir William Molesworth's Committee sat in 1837-38; the evidence given before it revealed a state of things almost too hideous for publication; and yet thirty years were allowed to pass before "the accursed thing," as Wakefield called it, was done away with altogether. The date generally given of the abolition of transportation is 1853, but it was continued to Western Australia till 1867, twelve years after Sir William Molesworth's death and thirty years after the appointment of his Committee.

Lord Howick, afterwards Lord Grey, and Sir George Grey were the chief advocates of transportation on the Committee, and they had a sufficient backing to insist upon the insertion of clauses in the Report, advocating, in lieu of the consignment system, the establishment of peniten-

tiaries in Australia for the reception of British-born convicts. From these clauses Sir William signified his dissent. The Report as a whole, with the exception just notified, was his work and recommended the immediate abolition of transportation. In the Rev. John Clay's memoir of his father, the reader may gather something of what transportation meant early in the nineteenth century and the close of the eighteenth. In 1799, of 300 convicts shipped in one vessel, *The Hillsborough*, 101 died of gaol fever on the voyage. In 1830 the horrors of the passage are thus referred to: "Starvation, filth and overcrowding rendered the middle passage of the convict ship as horrible as that of a slave ship."¹ Referring to Molesworth's Committee, Mr. Clay says: "Probably no volume was ever published in England of which the contents were so loathsome as the appendix to that Committee's Report." The horrible condition of the transportation colonies checked emigration. The free labourer naturally objected to join a community largely composed of criminals who had been bestialised by the degrading conditions of the punishment to which they had been subjected. Mr. Clay says: "The reconvicted felons who worked in chain gangs or were shot into Norfolk Island and other cesspools of the colony were, in the worst sense of the word, beasts. Altogether

¹ *British Colonial Policy*, by Hugh E. Egerton, p. 388.

it may be doubted whether in any community that ever existed the bestial and devilish elements of humanity were ever so fearfully developed as in the transportation colonies. One people there once was which might have vied with our Australian progeny, and that people God expunged from the earth with fire and brimstone.”¹

Molesworth highly valued the support which had been given to the opponents of transportation by Dr. Whately, Archbishop of Dublin. In 1838 he addressed to his constituents in Leeds a pamphlet which reproduces the Report of the Select Committee on Transportation; and to this he added a very powerful letter written on the subject by the Archbishop of Dublin. In the dedication of the pamphlet to the inhabitants of Leeds, Sir William is compelled again to refer to the ill-health which had prevented him, during the session of 1838, from taking so active a part as he could have wished in the business of the House of Commons. The Report of the Committee, chiefly written by himself, will, he hopes, incline his constituents to believe that he had not been entirely idle. He dedicates the reproduction of the Report to his constituents for two reasons:—

First, that you may learn how inefficient, cruel and demoralising a punishment transportation is; how utterly it fails in attaining the two grand objects of penal legis-

¹ *Life of Rev. John Clay*, p. 183.

lation, the prevention of crime by means of terror, and the reformation of offenders ; and how deplorable is the moral state of the communities to which it has given birth. Secondly, that when, by the attentive perusal of these pages, you shall be convinced of the truth of these statements, you may then be induced to exert yourselves to impress upon the Legislature the necessity of immediately abolishing a punishment in every way so disgraceful to a civilised and Christian nation : one which, if it be permitted to continue, after its character has been made known, it may then be doubted, and not without some show of reason, whether there is any amount of absurdity and wickedness which will not obtain the sanction of a Legislature.

I have published, likewise, a letter laid before the Committee, from the Archbishop of Dublin, who first, of late years, roused public attention to the nature of the punishment of transportation and to its effects on the penal colonies, and to whose admirable works on these subjects I have been most deeply indebted. . . .

I need hardly say that I entirely concur in all the recommendations of the Committee, except in the single one of establishing penitentiaries abroad ; my reasons for such disapproval are stated in a note appended to that part of the Report in which the proposal is made.—I have the honour to be, your obedient, humble servant,

WILLIAM MOLESWORTH.

PENCARROW, *Oct.* 1, 1838.

It was shown in the Report that convicts in the chain gangs were each night locked up in caravans or boxes from sunset to sunrise ; these were made to hold from twenty to twenty-eight men, but

were so small that the whole number could neither stand upright, nor sit down, nor lie down at the same time. Sir Francis Forbes, who had been Chief-Justice of Australia, said in evidence before the Committee that the punishment of transportation had been carried out in such a way as to induce many prisoners to seek death under its most appalling aspects rather than continue in the horrors which their life brought with it. He said he had known "many cases" in which convicts had deliberately committed crimes which subjected them to execution for the mere purpose of being sent to Sydney to be hanged. When asked, "What good do you think is produced by so horrible a punishment?" Sir Francis Forbes replied "that he thought it did not produce any good, and that if it were to be put to himself, he should not hesitate to prefer death under any form in which it could be presented to him, rather than such a state of endurance as that of the convict at Norfolk Island." Judge Burton, who also gave evidence, was so moved by the horrors which he revealed to the Committee that he could not restrain his tears. A convict who had been brought before this judge had said, "Let a man be what he will when he comes here, he is soon as bad as the rest; a man's heart is taken from him and there is given to him the heart of a beast." Dr. Ullathorne, who subsequently became Roman

Catholic Bishop of Birmingham, spent several years of his early life in Australia, and was Vicar-General of New South Wales. He gave evidence before the Committee in reference to events following a mutiny among the convicts, which had taken place in 1834 ; in the struggle to which the mutiny gave rise, nine convicts had been killed ; twenty-nine were subsequently convicted for the capital offence, and thirteen were executed. It was Dr. Ullathorne's duty to attend upon the condemned men and to offer them the consolations of religion. His story is best told in his own words :—

On my arrival at Norfolk Island, I immediately proceeded, although it was late at night, to the gaol, the commandant having intimated to me that only five days could be allowed for preparation, and he furnished me with a list of the thirteen who were to die, the rest having been reprieved. I proceeded therefore to the gaol, and upon entering I witnessed a scene such as I never witnessed in my life before. The men were originally confined in three cells ; they were subsequently assembled together ; they were not aware that any of them were reprieved. I found, so little had they expected the assistance of a clergyman, that when they saw me they at once gave up a plot for escape, which they had very ingeniously planned, and which might, I think, have succeeded so far as their getting into the bush. I said a few words to induce them to resignation, and I then stated the names of those who were to die ; and it is a remarkable fact that *as I mentioned the names of those men who were to die,*

they one after another, as their names were pronounced, dropped on their knees and thanked God that they were to be delivered from that horrible place, whilst the others remained standing mute. It was the most horrible scene I ever witnessed. Those who were condemned to death appeared to be rejoiced. It had been a very common thing with us to find prisoners on their way to the scaffold thanking God that they were not going to Norfolk Island.

Archbishop Whately's letter is a powerful indictment, not merely of the abuses of the system of transportation, but of its essential and inherent evils. The vast disproportion between the sexes, the female convicts being in the proportion of one in ten, had led to evils obvious to the most limited intelligence. It had been attempted, under the auspices of the Colonial Secretary, Lord Glenelg, to remedy these evils; and he had made a grant of money to a philanthropical society, which undertook, in consideration of the grant, to send out a considerable number of young women to the convict settlements. It is hardly surprising that the women selected were of a class which good people living in London were most pleased to be rid of; but it is also not surprising that their arrival did not sensibly ameliorate the condition of ignorant and brutal profligacy which existed in the convict settlements. Of course hard things were said and thought of the London philanthropists. But what

choice was presented to them? They had to send out either disreputable women, or women of good character. It appears that being severely criticised for doing the first they proceeded to do the second. Archbishop Whately's comment is unanswerable:—

To remedy some of the shocking effects resulting from the disproportion of the sexes, shiploads of young women, with certificates of good character, have been sent out with the view to purify the character of the Colonial community. To pour, from time to time, portions of sound wine into a cask full of vinegar, in hopes of converting the vinegar back into wine, would have been as rational and as successful a scheme. The result has been as might have been expected, that the new-comers, instead of disinfecting this moral lazar-house, for the most part become as deeply infected as the rest.

This letter of Whately's is like blow after blow from a sledge-hammer upon a rotten erection: it is not merely destroyed but reduced to pulp. And yet what years of dogged work were needed to secure the complete abolition of a system which necessarily involved such appalling evils. As Molesworth more than once said in his reiterated speeches and articles on transportation, "Among the great evils of having once adopted a bad system is the difficulty which attends the getting rid of it." One difficulty arose from the opposition of the vested interests involved. One of the chief requirements for the development of the natural

resources of the Colonies was labour. The convicts to a certain extent supplied this want. Employers of labour in the Colonies therefore supported the continuance of transportation. Another difficulty was to get the public at home to face the facts. They were so incredibly horrible that people refused to believe them : their very enormity was therefore their protection. All honour to the intrepid men who insisted that England should not choose but hear.

The members of the Committee favourable to transportation endeavoured in vain to elicit from the witnesses expressions of opinion or statements of fact in support of it. It had every feature which a penal system should not have : the punishment was uncertain, because under the consignment system it varied with the character of the consignee ; some consignees were savage and brutal, others were gentle and humane. By the consignment system, therefore, the law relegated the punishment of offenders to the judgment of private individuals. The most signal failure of transportation was the degrading influence it had on the criminals themselves. The devilish cruelty of some of the time-expired convicts to helpless natives is recounted in the gloomy pages of the literature bearing on the subject, but is too ghastly for repetition. The brutalising influences of transportation were constantly accumulating. To men degraded to the

position of brutes only brutal punishments could appeal. In one convict settlement, 247 men were flogged in one month in 1833, 9784 lashes being inflicted. These floggings were "as severe a punishment as could be inflicted on man." In a town of 90,000 inhabitants the annual average number of hangings amounted to 132. It is no wonder that we find the opponents of transportation constantly referring to its demoralising influences on those who had to carry it out. It was in fact twice cursed—cursing those who inflicted and those who endured it.

Transportation was costly in money to the mother country: it retarded the industrial development of the Colonies affected, by checking the natural flow of emigrants of good character. Notwithstanding such economic advantage as was involved by increasing the supply of labour in a newly settled country, the general feeling of each colony was strongly opposed to transportation; and it was universally recognised that the system could not be continued if the Colonies obtained self-government.

One of the first acts of the United States after the Declaration of Independence had been to decline any longer to be made a depository of British convicts. Sir George Grey, who had been a defender of transportation in Molesworth's Committee of 1837, endeavoured in 1848, when

he was Home Secretary, to make the Cape a convict settlement ; but the resistance of the Cape colonists amounted to a threat of rebellion, and the attempt was abandoned. The resentment of the Colonies selected as convict stations gave great weight to their claims to self-government, the constant urging of which became the chief work of Sir William Molesworth's life. The moral injury inflicted on the Colonies which were made the dumping-grounds for British crime, was only one example out of many which, to quote Sir William's vehement words in the House of Commons (speech on the state of the Colonies, 6th March 1838), "illustrated the imbecile and mischievous administration of their affairs by the Colonial Office." Lord Glenelg was Secretary for War and the Colonies at the time when Sir William Molesworth's Committee on Transportation was sitting : he was neither a member of it, nor did he render it any assistance. He was, according to the evidence of both friend and foe, an extremely religious man ; an official member of the Church Missionary Society and an evangelical philanthropist. But it was not he who originated the inquiry made by the Committee, or who appealed to the moral sense of the nation to put a stop to the horrors associated with transportation. Molesworth, and those who acted with him, proceeded exactly as if there had been no such department as the Colonial

Office and no such Minister as the Colonial Secretary, for the simple reason that Lord Glenelg's method of administration was "doing nothing reduced to a system." Even after the Report of the Committee had been distributed to both Houses of Parliament, there was no sign that Lord Glenelg or his department had any knowledge of the facts which it had brought to light. Whatever Lord Glenelg's private virtues may have been, he earned, and will probably always retain, the reputation of having been the worst Colonial Secretary of the nineteenth century. The horrors of transportation found no enemy in him, and he set a stolid opposition against efforts to promote colonisation. Whately and Ullathorne saved the reputation of the two great Churches with which they were associated from the charge of indifference to the cause of humanity and justice, but the chief credit of grappling with the monstrous evils of transportation must always be given to Wakefield, the ex-prisoner, and to Molesworth, at whom his contemporaries threw the epithets of "infidel" and "unbeliever." William Wilberforce once said that he would rather present himself before the throne of Heaven with Hannah More's *Shepherd of Salisbury Plain* in his hand than with *Peveril of the Peak*. If his words may be quoted with a difference, there are many who will be disposed to

say that they would rather present themselves before the throne of Heaven with the Report of the Transportation Committee than the whole of the Church Missionary Society's literature in one volume.

Wakefield with his sanguine temperament wrote to Molesworth on receiving a copy of the Report of the Transportation Committee that the "unclean thing" had got its death-warrant. In a sense it is true that the Report was the death-warrant of transportation. But the thing took a great deal of killing, and, as already observed, Molesworth had been many years in his grave before its life was finally extinct. While Molesworth lived he was unwearied in his attacks upon it. The last time he brought the subject before the House of Commons was on 20th May 1851, when he moved an address to the Queen to discontinue transportation to Van Diemen's Land. The House was counted out.

CHAPTER IX

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ASSOCIATIONS

WHEN Sir William Molesworth told his constituents at Leeds that he would only promise to support Lord Melbourne's Administration when to the best of his judgment they were right, he merely expressed the general principles which habitually governed his conduct. No one was a more thorough Protestant than he in his defence of the right of private judgment. He was in most things a Benthamite; but he followed Bentham only when to the best of his judgment the philosopher was right. In the matter of the relation of the Colonies to the mother country he entirely repudiated Bentham's teaching, which was identical with what was afterwards known as the doctrine of the Manchester School. Bentham's pamphlet, *Emancipate your Colonies*, advocated the complete separation of the Colonies

from the mother country. Place, and the main body of the Radicals of the first third of the nineteenth century, accepted this view, and it was adopted a little later as an axiom by the Manchester School. Cobden gave it expression in its crudest form when he said, referring to the Colonies and to the Army and Navy, "John Bull has for the next fifty years the task set him of cleansing his house from this stuff."¹ For a time this view, so far as it referred to the Colonies, swept almost everything before it. In 1852 Mr. Disraeli, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, wrote to the Foreign Secretary, "These wretched Colonies will all be independent in a few years, and are a millstone round our necks." One of Mr. Nassau Senior's conversations records how Bright, in 1856, expressed his strong disapproval of the fortification of Malta and Gibraltar, and said they ought to be given up. Lord Aberdeen, at whose house the conversation took place, replied, "Malta we cannot do without, but I wish we were well rid of Gibraltar." Lord Aberdeen's brother, Admiral Gordon, who was sitting by (John Bull not having cleansed his house of the Navy), looked up from his paper and said, "If you had seen the gut of Gibraltar, as I have seen it, absolutely swarming with privateers, you would wish to keep Gibraltar. Without it our trade

¹ *Empire Magazine*, February 1901.

might be almost excluded from the Mediterranean." Lord Aberdeen replied, "It is not a practical question, for no Minister could surrender it, but we pay heavily in peace for its services in war."¹

Those who were born in the first half of the last century will well remember when the tone which inspired this conversation minus Admiral Gordon's contribution to it was all but universal; the expression most in vogue about the Colonies was, that it could not be long before they "cut the painter," and the sooner it was accomplished the better.

It was the sincere conviction of the Manchester School that the desirability of the separation of the Colonies from the mother country was the lesson which England ought to have learned from the American War of Independence. But it was not thus that Molesworth and the school of Colonial Reformers of which he was a member, interpreted that great event. They never ceased to regret the separation of the United States from the mother country; they believed it to have been the inevitable punishment following bad government, and that the true lesson to be learned from it was to adopt a wholly different system under which the Colonies could be content as constituent members of the British Empire.

¹ *Many Memories*, by Mrs. Simpson, p. 249.

As a means to this end they constantly urged upon Parliament and the country the advisability of extending to the Colonies, in all suitable cases, and as quickly as possible, self-government on democratic lines, without severing the connection with the mother country. It is Molesworth's supreme title to distinction, that he adopted this view, and made it the chief object of his parliamentary and public life to educate the country to share it and see its importance. Wakefield, John Mill, Rintoul of the *Spectator*, and Colonel Torrens were the most vigorous representatives of this school of Colonial Reformers out of Parliament. It fell to Molesworth and Buller to represent it inside the House of Commons.¹ As Raleigh deserves to be remembered as the founder of the Colonial Empire of Great Britain, so these men must be ever remembered as its "liberators and regenerators."

At the time when they first came upon the

¹ As an example of the tone of Molesworth's views on the Colonies, a few sentences may be quoted from his House of Commons speech of 6th March 1838. He alludes to the opinions of those who think that the best thing a mother country can do with colonies is to get rid of them, and continues: "From this sentiment, notwithstanding my respect for some who entertain it, I venture to disagree altogether." He then refers to the North American colonies and to the United States, as well as to India and the then infant colonies of Australia, and rejoices in the fact that vast regions in distant parts of the world were in course of being reclaimed, cultivated, and inhabited by men and women of our own race, and adds: "Sir, for my part, I can see no necessary evil, but do see vast and inevitable good in the possession of colonies."

scene of practical politics, it would be difficult to express, and impossible to exaggerate, the hatred felt by the Colonies to the Home Government, especially to the Colonial Office. In one case, that of Canada, this hatred was expressed at first by veiled, and in 1837 by open rebellion. The duty of Molesworth and his coadjutors was to exert all their oratorical and literary capacity in persuading the British public that the Colonies were worth retaining. That the Colonies were valuable as markets for our commerce, as fields for the emigration of our surplus population, that a well-ordered and contented Colonial Empire would "flourish and become of incalculable utility to this country," formed the text of many a speech and article. In 1835 it was a new idea that freedom and empire could be combined, and Molesworth frequently found himself misunderstood when he said that a free Colonial Empire would be the only one worth boasting of. His contention that each colony, as quickly as possible after reaching a certain stage of development as regards population and settled institutions, should be entrusted with self-government, was regarded as one of the crazes of an able but wayward politician. Mrs. Austin, writing in March 1838 from Malta to Mrs. Senior, confesses herself thoroughly puzzled by the Radical attacks on Colonial administration.

I cannot imagine [she writes] what Molesworth can mean by his motion about Lord Glenelg [Secretary of State for War and the Colonies]. Is it to please Lord Brougham? At this distance it looks like madness—particularly to us.¹

Even Roebuck, who had many opportunities of knowing better, failed to understand what his friend was driving at, and wrote to his wife :

Molesworth has just started a crotchet, the strangest possible, that the Crown cannot form a Colonial Government without representative institutions.²

Of course this does not really represent what Molesworth said or thought, but it illustrates his difficulty in getting his aims understood. To attempt to establish free representative institutions in the Colonies was stigmatised in the Colonial Office itself as an attack upon the sovereignty of Great Britain. The party of Colonial Reformers had to fight their way through every kind of obstacle, including neglect and misrepresentation. Even as late as 1851, the battle was not won ; and the present Lord Thring, then Mr. Henry Thring, wrote a pamphlet which was published by the Society for the Reform of Colonial Government, entitled “The Supremacy of Great Britain not inconsistent with the Self-Government of the Colonies.”

¹ *Three Generations of Englishwomen.*

² *Leader's Life of Roebuck.*

The Colonial Office was dominated from 1834 for more than ten years by the permanent Under-Secretary, Sir James Stephen, an able and conscientious man of the highest character and indefatigable industry. His predominance in the office earned him the names, according to Sir Henry Taylor, of King Stephen and Mr. Over-Secretary Stephen. He was closely connected with the Clapham Sect and the Church Missionary Society; he was a very strict Sabbatarian and a powerful opponent of slavery. His son records that he never knew him do a stroke of work on Sunday except once when he worked continuously for forty-eight hours from Saturday to Monday drafting the bill, which afterwards became law, for the abolition of slavery.¹ Sir James Stephen looked with no friendly eye on the various schemes for promoting emigration and colonisation, because he wished to protect the aboriginal races of New Zealand and Australia from white men's diseases and white men's sins. He desired men to know of European civilisation only through contact with missionaries and their agents. Mr. Charles Grant, afterwards Lord Glenelg, identified himself with these views more completely perhaps than any other Colonial Secretary; but for many years successive Secretaries of State—and Molesworth complains that there had

¹ *National Dictionary of Biography*, art. "Stephen, Sir James."

been six in nine years—did little more than reflect and repeat Sir James Stephen's views on Colonial questions.

These, then, were the antagonists: on the one side, Wakefield, Buller, Molesworth, etc., advocating with the fervour of a religious propaganda systematic colonisation and the extension of free government and every other adjunct of civilised life which could help to make Colonial life attractive; on the other, Sir James Stephen, with the Colonial Office and the Church Missionary Society behind him, doing everything in his power to stop and thwart the schemes put forward by the colonisers.

Wakefield's previous history, and Molesworth's reputation as a free-thinker in religion, doubtless had their effect in sharpening the edge of Sir James Stephen's opposition. One Secretary of State for the Colonies told a deputation from the Colonial Society that the Government wished to discourage emigration. Another objected to give any encouragement to the formation of a self-governing community on the ground that "it was proposed to erect within the British monarchy a Government purely republican."¹ Molesworth and Buller retaliated by constant attacks upon the Colonial Office and the Secretary of State, in speeches in the House of Commons and in articles and

¹ Dr. Garnett's *Life of Wakefield*, p. 97.

pamphlets. Buller referred to the failure to found a colony in West Australia, and said it was due to the Colonial Office having overlaid the infant at its birth. Stephen was, no doubt, the official aimed at in Buller's savage sketch of "Mr. Mother Country" in his book on *Responsible Government for the Colonies*. When Wakefield and his friends were organising the New Zealand Company, which eventually secured New Zealand as a British colony, Buller wrote to Molesworth that though he (Buller) had shown himself "the first diplomatist of this or any other age, Talleyrand himself could not have reconciled Stephen to the New Zealand Company." The despatching by the Company of ships laden with emigrants to New Zealand in 1839 forced the hand of the Colonial Office and made it necessary for the Government to give the emigrants the protection of the mother country.

The South Australia Association was founded in 1834; the New Zealand Association in 1837; of both Molesworth was a director and active supporter in the pecuniary as well as in every other sense of the word. At a critical moment in the history of the battle between the Colonisers and the Home Government, the Duke of Wellington came to the assistance of the former. His weight in the House of Lords turned the scale in favour of the Bill for the colonising of South Australia.

There is a sort of Irish flavour in the fact that the great Duke's services to South Australia were commemorated by calling the chief town in New Zealand by his name. Wakefield and his friends wished the name to be given to the capital of South Australia; but "Adelaide" won the day, and Wellington's name was held in reserve for the next great colonising scheme.

Molesworth's pecuniary responsibility in regard to South Australia is referred to in a note in the last chapter. I have not been able to discover what the total capital of the South Australian Association was; the capital of the New Zealand Association, at the time of its foundation, is stated by Sir William Molesworth to have been £250,000.¹

A street in Wellington, New Zealand, called Molesworth Street, commemorates Sir William Molesworth's connection with the foundation of the colony.

Those who would follow the history of the New Zealand and South Australia Associations in detail are referred to the interesting account of them which is to be found in Dr. Garnett's *Life of Wakefield*, and in Mr. Hugh Egerton's History of British Colonial Policy. It is sufficient here to say that the founding of the two colonies was due to the public spirit of these private associations, and that guided by the scientific principles laid down

¹ House of Commons speech on Colonial Lands, 27th June 1839.

by Wakefield, the mistakes were avoided which had led to disaster and disappointment in other colonial enterprises. The Government had by this time learnt by bitter experience the evil consequences of making huge grants of land, free of cost, to individual emigrants, as tending to isolation when the needs of the infant community rendered the co-operation of labour most essential.¹ They had already put a fixed price of 5s. an acre on land in New South Wales early in the thirties ; but though this conceded the principle contended for by Wakefield, he and his associates were by no means satisfied with its application, and the creation of the South Australian Association, and the subsequent founding of the colony of South Australia, was the immediate result of Wakefield's determination to have free scope for the application of his principles. It was determined from the outset that neither of the colonies was to be used as a convict settlement ; the supply of labour was to be promoted by assisted emigration, the funds for which were provided by the sale of land ; capital was raised by the company, and applied in developing the natural resources of the new colonies. Molesworth's assistance to these associations in and out of Parliament was invaluable ; he spared neither time,

¹ Men had died of starvation in the midst of the vast area of land freely granted to them, for lack of the labour and capital needed to make the earth yield her increase.

labour, nor his purse in promoting them, and in the case of New Zealand he gave more than time, labour, or money, for he encouraged the departure to the newly founded colony of his dearly loved youngest brother, Francis, to whom reference has already been several times made in these pages. The first ship, named *The Tory*, despatched by the association with emigrants for New Zealand sailed from Plymouth on 5th May 1839. Francis Molesworth was not in her. He did not attain his majority till the 19th of May of the same year. The Pencarrow manuscripts contain an entry, not in Sir William's writing, probably in that of his mother, eloquent in its studied reserve, about the departure of this Benjamin of the family.

Francis, 19th May 1839, birthday, and twenty-one years of age, determined to go to New Zealand. On Wednesday, 4th September, at eight o'clock in the evening, he took his last leave of us for London, to sail on the 10th or 11th in *The Oriental* for that Island.

In the following year there is a letter from Sir William to Mr. Woollcombe.

I have been reflecting on the fact that Francis has now embarked the whole of his property in New Zealand, with some anxiety on his account lest he might feel himself, should his speculations not immediately succeed, in want of money to go on with. This would put him in a very painful position and he might be compelled to sacrifice property. After mature delibera-

tion I think it would be kind and wise to inform him that if he should really feel himself in difficulty, I will honour his bills (due notice being given me) to a certain amount, say £2000, he engaging himself to pay fair Colonial interest. . . . You will readily understand my feelings and wishes, and therefore if you think the course I propose wise, I would be obliged to you to write him a letter of business to that effect.

Many high hopes and expectations went with Francis Molesworth to his new home. Mrs. Grote wrote to Miss Molesworth (now Mrs. Ford) :—

Thanks for the news of your dear Francis, in which we both feel interested. He has much to contend with, like other colonists looking to the parent country for security against aggression or dispossession as well as many secondary benefits, and being kept in a feverish state between hope and despair, owing to the absorption in home affairs here, which leaves the heads of Government little opportunity for attending to our hardy and brave distant settlers' real interests. I admire Francis's indomitable perseverance ; he really resembles the old settlers of New England, whom nothing disheartened. He *must* thrive, and before he is thirty-five will be a mature character, such as is needed to govern and consolidate a new society. Who knows but that he may sway the sceptre somewhere in those distant climes yet ?

The fantastic prognostication of the last words illustrates the romance which was then associated with Colonial undertakings. In a very different



Francis Alexander Molesworth.

spirit, but one which is also flushed by a light that never was on sea or land, Charles Austin wrote to Sir William about the departure of Francis.

I hope and intend to pay you a visit at Pencarrow. I could have gone down with Francis when he left London the other Tuesday, and put him off with an excuse, the truth being that I would not run the risk of interfering with his last days. Tell him he has a noble spirit, that he is doing what he ought to do, and that I pray God he will succeed. I don't know why these adventures should be so attractive ; but I feel like you—I wish I were going myself. New sky, new land, new men, new life, without kings, lords, and priests, and the rest of hell.

The new sky, new land, new men, and new life to which Francis was bound probably justified the saying about French forms of government, *Plus cela change, plus c'est la même chose*. But Francis Molesworth played an honourable and laborious part as a pioneer colonist. He died in England in 1846, his death being the result of an accident which took place in New Zealand while he was engaged in felling a tree. He was greatly esteemed and beloved by his fellow-colonists as well as by his family and by his English friends. *The New Zealand Journal*, commenting on his death at the time, spoke of the high tone and of the spirit of enterprise which he infused among the earliest settlers in the neighbourhood of Wellington, who

were stimulated by his example and aided by his advice. The writer of the obituary notice said of him :—

Long before others had brought themselves to face the difficulties of a new country, Mr. Molesworth had unfolded the capabilities of his adopted home by showing what it would produce, thus urging on others, who speedily followed his example. He was the first cultivator in New Zealand, and the remembrance of his perseverance when less enterprising minds were in a state of despondency will long be remembered by all who knew him. In the qualities of energy, utter defiance of hardship, disregard of personal comfort, and devotion to the interests of the colony he will not easily be surpassed.—*New Zealand Journal*, 15th August 1846.

An obelisk was placed to his memory on a rock called Barrett's Reef, near Wellington, and his portrait hangs among those of the pioneers of New Zealand colonisation in one of the Government buildings at Wellington. The brave and beautiful young life may to-day be almost forgotten, but none the less it is men such as these which have made, by the actual sweat of their brow and labour of their hands, the greatness of England's Colonial Empire. Charles Austin refers, in the letter just quoted, to Sir William Molesworth having felt when his brother was going to New Zealand, the powerful attraction of these Colonial enterprises. But there

never was a man less fitted, on the whole, to be a Colonial pioneer. His delicate health was in itself an insuperable bar, and he was in all things essentially the product of a finished civilisation, exquisite in dress, dainty and fastidious in habits, dependent for happiness on books and social intercourse with congenial spirits. The only tastes which would have found a wider scope in Colonial life than at home were his passion for trees and tree-planting, and his interest in dogs and horses. Nevertheless, Wakefield, the enthusiast, who saw everything through colonisation spectacles, seriously urged on Sir William to lead a Colonial party in person. Dr. Garnett speaks of Wakefield's irresistible powers of persuasion. "He was a master in the art of persuading. He seldom failed if he could get his victim into conversation." If he failed in this instance, it was perhaps because he trusted to his pen instead of his tongue.

BD. ST. BUILDINGS,
January 4, 1840.

MY DEAR MOLESWORTH—I dined at Leader's yesterday with a party of keen politicians, . . . and as I returned with my brother we remarked that no subject of English politics had been mentioned except that Charles Austin asked Leader, in a faint, half-derisive tone, whether he intended to go to the "grand demonstration festival at Leeds."

This set me a-thinking about you in a train which

is just touched in another letter going with this, which was written yesterday, and here's the result.

I guess from your talking of the Governorship of New South Wales that you are as sick as other "Liberals" of Home politics, and, unlike them, indisposed to the sloth and uselessness to which Liberals are condemned by the state and prospect of public affairs here. If so, why should you not strike out some action to perform, in which your political knowledge might be turned to account? Why not do something remarkable before you die? and so forth. Then, is the (I think) attainable object of the Governorship of New South Wales worth pursuing? I think, and you will think, *not*, unless you could get a kind of Durham-Canada power, and be sure of the support of the Government at home in a thorough-going course. Without both these conditions the Governorship of New South Wales would only bring you disappointment and vexation, and of neither is there, I think, any chance. But then is there no career in which you could draw on your own fund of self-reliance, and be a maker of events without hindrance from ignorance or cowardice? I think there is — that of founding a colony in person. Nor is this a mere speculation, for the idea has been put into my head, though partly by the contemplation of your going to waste and uselessness here, still partly by the fact that the formation of a new colony in New Zealand has been projected by men who would rejoice to have you as their leader. Among them is your old friend, E. Duppa, and my brother Arthur. The latter I consider eminently qualified for fagging at such a work, having the whole subject at his fingers' ends, with confirmed habits of industry, order, duty-doing, and with courage and good-

temper to boot. Some other persons of the best kind are thinking of joining in this enterprise. New Zealand is the best field, the physical geography of the country pointing out the expediency of forming many separate settlements. There you would plant the settlement of Molesworth, leading out some thousands of people, and arrange its municipal government. Then as a member of the General Council of Government for the Island you would give the tone and character to general legislation. You would be more than Governor, who is an officer dependent on the breath of the office at home, and sure to be impeded if he try to do well ; you would in fact get through your influence in the Council that legislative power which you have so long desired to wield somewhere. But the planting, the formation of society with your own hand, is the charm in my estimation ; and if I possessed the power which you do of getting a great tail to follow me, I would see useless Leeds and slothful Pencarrow at the devil and do this thing in great style. You have the further advantage over me of being at a time of life when men of spirit want to be performing actions ripened by study and thought, but not come to the term when reflection on the past naturally takes the place of action. . . . You might command the Company [the New Zealand Association] to every sort of co-operation. So many would join you that this should be by far the greatest colonising enterprise of this day or any day. And say you gave seven years to it ; then though weeds would grow in the garden at Pencarrow, and somebody else would accomplish *nothing* as member for Leeds, you would have made your mark upon the face of the world, and for what else is it worth while to live when one has got to be thirty ? I would

work for your success and renown with all my heart and soul ; and you know how zealously I can do that for another while he is in earnest.

I am quite serious, and beg for a serious answer.—
Yours ever truly, E. G. WAKEFIELD.

Molesworth's reply is not forthcoming, but its tenour can be gathered from Wakefield's rejoinder, which is here given almost in full :—

BD. ST. BUILDINGS,
January 8, 1840.

MY DEAR MOLESWORTH—As you desire, I write again. Your seven conditions very closely agree with a set which, in talking the matter over with my brother, we had anticipated as essential to the doing of this thing in the best possible way. After further consideration I say—

1st. The body of the right sort of men is indispensable. I know of some, but am confident that almost too many will flock to your standard, provided it be properly raised.

2nd. The “large purchase,” say £200,000, is just what we have talked about. On this point I have no doubt, provided the thing be well set about.

3rd. I had said before your letter arrived that our new system of colonising alters the case for a leading man nowadays, and that an outlay or investment of £10,000 would be ample. £6000 would be enough. Penn spent £50,000, but then he did not understand emigration fund, town acres, and the other things which make the public provide funds for founding a well-led colony. I had said that you would dispose of your stock, saving only

a qualification (£500) in order to be a director. . . . You would not spend the £3000 a year ; and if you laid your investment well out in land only, you might grow richer a good deal by the undertaking.

4th. The most suitable place in the islands. By our arrangement with Government we could go where we pleased at any time and pick land by means of our surveyors. In choosing a good place the only difficulty is the *embarras de richesses*. There are a dozen places—such is the nature of the country.

5th. Not to mention my own stake at Port Nicholson (£1000, which is much for me), I consider that we are all under a strong obligation to abstain from doing anything that might hurtfully affect the men who had the pluck to go to the Cannibal Lands when all seemed uncertainty and risk. But I am satisfied on full reflection long ago that the more and greater settlements there are in New Zealand, and the sooner they become great, the better for the Wellingtonians.¹

7th. I have said already that a few years would suffice for this work ; but were I in your place and going, no man should know when, or even *that*, I intended to return. I would go like Penn, who returned more than once, I think.

This being Friday, Rintoul could spare but a short time for a talk on the question. We have agreed to go over the whole ground on Monday. His first impression is that all depends on the manner—that you might do it in a manner to damage your position as an Englishman—that you might do it in a manner to stand higher than ever in the estimation of your countrymen and of

¹ The omission of No. 6 is Mr. Wakefield's.

the world. Here he and I agreed ; and then postponing further discussion till Monday, we jumped to the conclusion that in order to keep the manner of going to work in your own hands, it is essential that you should keep the secret of your project. For instance, it would be wretched if any but yourself should tell your constituents or the public of your intentions. Not a breath on the subject should be heard till you yourself blew a loud trump of explanation. The *announcement* of your purpose should be your own—and should be both an invitation to kindred spirits to join you and a legacy to the cause of liberty at home. For all this, secrecy is indispensable. If any jackass could go about saying that you thought of colonising in person, I should be glad to cut his tongue out. Keep in your own power. The resignation of your seat at Leeds would be an event ; take care to have the conduct of it. As far as I am concerned your secret shall be safe.

Our charter¹ is all but ready, and the capital is to be greatly increased. We talk of a great Colonial gathering, in the shape of a grand dinner to Lord John, to which all sorts of Colonials would be invited. I should like the Charter, and the gathering and the announcement of the second colony to come all at once as a broadside that would shake the public mind, and, with this view, wish that you had been coming sooner to town. For while you are in suspense, I will endeavour to suspend everything else. Would not cold-catching on the road do as well for the Leeds meeting as business at home ? I see such greatness in the prospect of your deciding to take this step that I shall fret till you say Yes or No. If

¹ To the New Zealand Company.

you say Yes we will make this surpass immeasurably in all good qualities everything of the sort that has been done in the world before.—Yours ever truly,

E. G. WAKEFIELD.

A skilful letter, but it failed of its object. It was Wakefield all over to suggest to Molesworth that the *éclat* caused by the public announcement of his undertaking to personally conduct a Colonial expedition to New Zealand would enable him to get rid of his stock in the New Zealand Company with the exception of the £500 which was the qualification for being a director. The secrecy, too, would have been all in favour of Wakefield's scheme, as it would have prevented Molesworth from discussing the project with his friends.

Wakefield could charm a bird off a tree, but it was beyond even his powers to persuade Sir William Molesworth that he was fitted personally to lead a party of pioneer colonists to create a settlement in New Zealand. As the French lady said: "When one arrives at middle age, even if one does not know one's self perfectly, at any rate one begins to have one's suspicions." In 1840 Sir William was thirty years old, and he did not misjudge himself so grossly as to believe he was fit for the task to which Wakefield invited him. He appears to have neglected Wakefield's advice to bury the project in profound secrecy; for he both spoke and wrote

very fully to Woollcombe about it, as the following letters show :—

PENCARROW, *Wednesday.*

[Probable date, *January 1840.*]

X MY DEAR WOOLLCOMBE—The more I reflect upon Wakefield's project the stronger appear the objections to it, which we discussed at Plymouth. I have no doubt of the success of the colony ;¹ but in a personal point of view, I don't think the honour gained will be very great or sufficient to repay the privations. I do not feel that either my *health* or *character* qualify me to be the *popular leader* of an expedition. I do not see what position I should hold, or what I should have to do. Penn and others expended their fortunes ; the colony was theirs, and they were lords and masters. In those days there was something wonderful in going to America ; now it is a trifle to pay a visit to Australia. My chief use would be, first, in this country as a great *decoy-duck* to tempt emigrants ; secondly, in the colony as a sort of *pigeon* whom every one will feel he has a right to pluck, from whom everything will be expected, and whom every one will abuse if anything goes wrong, taking care at the same time to attribute all success to their own personal exertions. Besides this there is too great an inclination on the part of Wakefield for stage effects, and too much will depend on them to satisfy me ; for my feelings are revolted by such a course of proceeding. And, lastly, I can't put reliance on Wakefield, because he has too many projects afloat. This is the summary of my last letter to Wakefield in reply to one which I now enclose to you,

¹ He wrote to Mrs. Grote a little later than this that he would not take £6000 for property in New Zealand, for which a short time back he had given only £1000.

desiring you to return it with Wakefield's first letter. I told him your project of a company of which I should be governor: the only feasible plan, but to which again there seem to me grave personal objections. On the whole I think that going to New Zealand will damage my prospects as a public man in this country; that I am steadily rising in public opinion here; that if I have firmness to pursue for the next ten years the course which I have already pursued, I shall have the opportunity of distinguishing myself, and by that time a change probably will take place in the aspect of political affairs. I feel disgusted at present, it is true, but on mature reflection I think that feeling is not justified. I should like to go to New South Wales with powers that the Colonial Office won't give; because that would be to terminate a task I had commenced, and would not seem to change me from an Englishman into a colonist, as Wakefield would advise me to let it appear. . . . I must say in conclusion that the obstacles to Wakefield's plan seem to me insurmountable, but I shall wait till I meet him in town to come to an absolute decision in the negative. I hope you did as I desired and pointed out to him the difficulties when you wrote to him. . . .—Yours truly,

WM. MOLESWORTH.

There are further letters from Wakefield, in one of which he says that the "peace of Pencarrow," to which he has been invited on a visit, would enable him to "abridge, improve, and popularise *England and America*,¹ with good effect." He is

¹ *England and America*, by Edward Gibbon Wakefield, was first published in 1833.

wild with Charles Austin because it is expected he will decline to be a candidate for the representation of Manchester. "What a chance! the post of Leader of the Popular Party, the representation of Manchester, succeeding a Cabinet Minister, and the whole recess for preparation. By jingo! it would provoke a saint if he refuses."

Charles Austin did refuse peremptorily, and Wakefield could not use him as one of the "decoy-ducks" he was constantly searching for.

It must not be forgotten that the New Zealand Association had been working for many years with the aim of obtaining a charter from the Government. Once they had been apparently near success, and thought they had secured the support of the Government; but these hopes were doomed to disappointment, and the Bill introduced on behalf of the Association in 1838 was opposed from the Government bench by Lord Howick and Sir George Grey and defeated in the House of Commons by nearly three to one. The Association then dissolved and re-formed itself as a limited liability company under the title of the New Zealand Land Company. This was done to meet the wishes of the Government. Subsequently to this the negotiations with the Colonial Office about the granting of a charter to the New Zealand Land Company were developing favourably. The incapable Lord Glenelg had been succeeded

in 1839 as Colonial Secretary, first by Lord Normanby, then by Lord John Russell. Notwithstanding Buller's opinion that Talleyrand himself could not have reconciled Sir James Stephen to the New Zealand Company, Lord John did not prove unamenable to its overtures for friendly negotiation. After long *pourparlers* and long waiting the Company at last received from Lord John the terms on which he would consent to the granting of a charter. Wakefield's talents for diplomacy were not inconsiderable. Through his management of the Board, though some of the terms were unpalatable, Lord John's offer was accepted at once and completely. Wakefield wrote in the highest spirits to Molesworth :—

N.Z. HOUSE, *October 26, 1840.*

MY DEAR MOLESWORTH—Lest you should prepare a speech for the Plymouth dinner which you would not be able to make, I tell you the secret of a secret committee of the directors who have been negotiating with Lord John.

Instead of abusing the Government you will have to praise them. They have not merely conceded what we might have gained by continuing the war, but have offered us all that we could desire. The main points are in Lord Elliot's report with this addition, that our Company is really to be the agent of the State for colonising N. Z. We are to have a charter for forty years with an increased capital and great powers. The Plymouth Co. is fully recognised. It will be

called an enormous job, but is really a wise settlement of *all* the questions. We shall have the official announcement to-morrow, I hope, and a copy shall be sent to you. I propose to reach Plymouth on Thursday night, and should like to meet you on Friday morning for the purpose of *explaining* our new position. I shall go to the big hotel where I dined with you. At present all this is a secret and must be kept so till we have the official determination of Government. Lord John has behaved very well and Stephen excellently.

I wish you joy of your Leeds letter. It is most *à propos*, and will prove, I think, very effective.

I am very glad to think that your spec. in New Zealand shares must now turn out very profitable.

This negotiation has lasted for six weeks, and you will now see that I had good reason for not leaving town. The satisfaction of the triumph is almost intolerable.

I think that Lady Molesworth and Miss Mary are entitled as shareholders to be told this good news, more especially as they may tell it again at Pencarrow without betraying our secret.—Yours ever truly,

E. G. WAKEFIELD.

The dinner came off at Devonport, not Plymouth; Wakefield was present and told Charles Buller that Molesworth's speech was "like that of an angel."

Financially Sir William had backed the New Zealand Company with his accustomed generosity where big schemes were in view and long purses were required. When the matter of the charter was still in suspense, and the capital of the New

Zealand Company was still incompletely subscribed, he promoted a plan whereby at the end of six months the Directors should take up, by equal division among them, all the remaining shares. There is a fragment of a letter from Sir William to Woollcombe explaining this and why he felt bound to make himself responsible for taking up another £1500 worth of shares. There is an apologetic tone about the letter, as if Woollcombe, in his capacity as agent, had remonstrated at the large sums already involved in the Colonial enterprises of his chief. But when we put together this and Wakefield's character, and the "intolerable" emotions of triumph from which he was suffering, it is not surprising that he describes Molesworth's speech at Devonport as "the speech of an angel."

CHAPTER X

CANADA

WHILE the Wakefield group of Colonial Reformers in and out of Parliament were pushing their views on Colonial questions in a practical manner by setting on foot infant communities in New Zealand and South Australia, an event happened which displayed more than anything else could have done the errors of the old Colonial Office methods of administration, and indirectly led to a complete change in the relations between the mother country and the Colonies. This event formed the starting-point of the definite assumption by Great Britain of the principle that the union could only be satisfactorily maintained on the basis of Colonial self-government, accompanied by a recognition of Imperial claims and responsibilities. Canada had become a British colony in 1763. The population was then almost wholly French, and continued to be governed, after it had become a British possession, under the old French law. This

worked smoothly until the body of English-born colonists in Canada became considerable ; when this took place, after the manner of their nation, they began to desire a representative system of government. A House of Representatives was then called into existence, elected by 40s. freeholders. As English statesmen had then arrived at nothing better for the Colonies than an effort to imitate as closely as possible the English constitution, a Council was also created, answering as far as might be to the House of Lords. Members of the Council were not subject to election, but were nominated by the Crown for life, and in some instances the office was made hereditary. The French Canadians became alarmed by these changes, for they saw that the Council would be entirely British by birth and in spirit. In order to meet the feeling of French *versus* English, the colony was divided in 1791 into two parts, Upper and Lower Canada ; the dividing line was drawn so as to leave Lower Canada almost wholly to the French, and Upper Canada to the British settlers. Each province had a separate Governor and separate assemblies and councils. Fox warned the Government of his day of the dangers of this arrangement, but for several years it worked well, and both Upper and Lower Canada remained for many years heartily loyal to Great Britain, fighting vigorously on her side in the American War of

1812. After the European peace which followed the battle of Waterloo, there was a considerable increase in the emigration from Great Britain to Canada, but the newcomers did not find either in Upper or Lower Canada a government well suited to them. English and Scotch emigrants did not take kindly to the old French seigneurial law of Lower Canada; while in Upper Canada they found a government of the extreme aristocratic church and king type. It was not long before a bitter conflict raged between the elected and the nominated Chambers. The conflict bore a considerable resemblance to that in the English revolutionary war in the seventeenth century between the Parliament and the Crown. The elective Assembly in both Upper and Lower Canada claimed, what the House of Commons has always claimed, the power of the purse. They also demanded that the Council should be subject to election. The Council strongly opposed both these demands, and carried on the fight with the representative Chamber by throwing out nearly every popular measure which had been passed by the elected representatives of the people. The quarrel between the two Chambers was aggravated in every possible way. In Lower Canada especially it represented the deep-seated feuds of race and religion. The nominees of the Crown who formed the Council were English and Protestant; the

members of the Assembly were nearly all French and Catholic. Such settlers in Lower Canada who were not of French origin were for the most part Scottish Presbyterians or English Nonconformists; a sturdy stock, thoroughly imbued with the principle that taxation and representation should go together.

In one of his speeches on Canada (House of Commons, 23rd January 1838), Sir William Molesworth pointed out that Lord Ripon, when Colonial Secretary, had authorised the retention of Colonial funds, raised by the sale of land, in order to pay £3000 a year to a Church of England Bishop of Quebec. The Home Government by this action diverted funds which should have been at the disposal of the colony, to the purpose of subsidising a Church to which only about one-fifth even of the Protestants of Canada belonged; this fifth was equal to not more than one-twenty-fifth of the whole population. In consequence of this and of other high-handed acts of oppression, the House of Assembly in Lower Canada in 1833 refused to pass a civil list for the payment of official salaries. Upper Canada followed suit in 1836. Both provinces peremptorily demanded the control of their own finances, and that the Council (or Upper Chamber) should be made elective: this the Home Government as peremptorily refused; and on 6th March 1837, Lord John Russell brought forward resolutions in the House of

Commons to enable the Governor of Lower Canada to dispose of its revenues without the consent of the Canadian people.

Molesworth took part in the debate in opposition to Lord John Russell's resolutions. He contended with much force that the powers of the House of Assembly in Canada over Canadian revenues were founded on statute and also on natural justice. He urged that they were fundamentally identical with those of the House of Commons over English revenues.

The noble Lord, by the resolutions in my hands, intends to propose in the committee that the Governor of Lower Canada should be authorised for the present to appropriate the revenues of that Province without the consent of the Representatives of the Canadian people. I contend that no arguments can be adduced to justify such an act on the part of the Imperial Parliament, for it would be an act of tyranny, consequently the question ought not to be entertained. . . . The people of Lower Canada complain of certain grievances. The Representatives of the people have adopted the constitutional means of refusing to grant supplies till those grievances be redressed. The noble Lord proposes that the British Legislature should evince a sovereign power, and that it should interfere with the control of the House of Assembly over the public purse. Has he any right to make such a proposal? I deny that he has.

Sir William then adduced the legal grounds on which his contention was based, and cited the Acts

of Parliament applicable to the subject and continued :—

The alteration of a constitution when done with the concurrence of the majority of the people constitutes constitutional reform ; when done in opposition to their wishes it becomes an act of tyranny. In the latter case, if the people be strong enough they are morally bound to have recourse to the right of resistance. The plea of the noble Lord must be that the conduct of the House of Assembly is bad. I deny that either he or this House is constitutionally speaking a judge of that fact. The House of Assembly is not responsible to us : it is responsible to its constituents, and to those constituents only, for its conduct. . . . If the noble Lord attempt to carry out his resolutions, the question is one that can only be settled by force. The British Legislature has granted to the House of Assembly of Lower Canada sovereignty in money matters. That sovereignty the noble Lord now wishes to resume. The control of the purse, every one knows, constitutes the essence of freedom. The Canadians are still free. Will they permit themselves to be made slaves by these resolutions ? In a similar cause the people of this country worked out a great and glorious revolution. They justly punished a monarch who had dared to tax them without their consent. For a similar reason our fellow-citizens in the United States bid us defiance and shook off our yoke. . . . The Saxon will permit no one to interfere with his purse ; he will fight for it first ; that is the peculiarity of the race. It is proper that the people of England should know clearly and should distinctly understand that the noble Lord proposes to do that in Canada which would make every

man of English blood a rebel, to prevent which our ancestors fought—to prevent which we would fight if necessary.

Lord John Russell's resolutions were carried by an immense majority, 269 to 46, and the prospect of averting open rebellion in Canada became hopeless. Grote, writing about a year later (February 1838) to his friend, John Austin, who was then in Malta, said :—

The affairs of Canada have turned out most calamitous, the discontents in Lower Canada were so bitterly aggravated by the resolutions [Lord John Russell's] passed by the English Parliament last spring, that there has been open rebellion, and the Ministry have been driven to propose further measures of coercion against that colony resisted by some fifteen Radicals in the House of Commons, of whom I was one. *[Handwritten: I never will say not - See p 117]*

This letter indicates a further split in the Radical party and a political but not a personal breach between Molesworth and Grote. The “further coercive measures” against Canada, referred to by Grote in February 1838, were contained in the Canada Bill, passed in January of the same year, suspending the Canadian Constitution and appointing Lord Durham to be Lord High Commissioner and Governor-General with extraordinary powers to deal with the whole condition of things in Upper and Lower Canada. In Mrs. Grote's letters, published and unpublished, she

never refers to Lord Durham without some contemptuous epithet attached to his name—"that wayward nobleman" is one of the gentlest of the expressions used. Francis Place shared the Grotes' view of Durham and wrote :—

Lord Durham is a "lost mutton." He had a chance [in Canada] such as few men have had, but he was all a lord and none a man, and could not take the high station offered to him . . . he is defunct as a public man, etc.

On the other hand, John Mill and Harriet Martineau, among influential persons not in Parliament, supported Lord Durham with an intensity of conviction which makes their pages glow with an indestructible fire even at the present day ; and Molesworth was with them, heart and soul, and supported Lord Durham and his mission with enthusiasm. He made an important speech in Parliament on 23rd January 1838, on the second reading of the Canada Bill, and for one word which he says against that part of the Bill which suspended the Constitution of the colony, he speaks pages in support of the appointment of Lord Durham. It was within the bounds of possibility at that time, and it was certainly ardently hoped by a section of the Radical party, that the leader and man of action they had looked for so long in vain would be found in the person of Lord Durham. Mill and others of the Radicals

constantly use the expression that they hoped Lord Durham would quit the Whigs and “set up for himself.” The Whigs were evidently quite aware of this feeling and cordially hated Lord Durham for it. There had been a fierce outburst of rage between Lord Durham and Lord Brougham at a banquet given to Lord Grey in Edinburgh in 1834 when the Whigs were out of office ; and the two antagonists threatened a renewal of the fight when they met again in the House of Lords ; but the opportunity for this was not given them. When Melbourne’s Government of 1835 was formed Lord Durham was shelved, being sent as Ambassador to St. Petersburg, and the Great Seal was not offered to Brougham but put in commission, a deadly affront which he never forgave. Lord Brougham had an abnormally developed capacity for hatred, and much as he hated the whole Whig Government, which had left him out, he hated Lord Durham even more. Events in Canada soon offered him the acute pleasure of wounding them through him. Lord Durham was looked upon as a sort of *enfant terrible* by the Whigs. Melbourne would not have him in either of his Cabinets. He was sent to St. Petersburg in 1835, and in 1837 Lord Melbourne wrote to Lord John Russell :—

Everybody, after the experience we have had, must

doubt whether there can be peace and harmony in a Cabinet of which Lord Durham is a member.¹

Durham was Lord Grey's son-in-law, and the violent quarrels between them appear from the Greville Memoirs to have been a constant source of gossip in official circles. When he returned from St. Petersburg it was therefore necessary to find something else to keep him quiet, and it was determined to send him to Canada. In this haphazard way was brought about one of the most epoch-making appointments in English history. Because his former colleagues could not get on with him, and because some of the Radicals at any rate wanted him to be their leader, and because he had a considerable power of making himself disagreeable at home, it was necessary to provide for Lord Durham abroad. The settlement of Canada, then in rebellion, was a task both difficult and, as the immediate event proved, thankless. It might very well have been the grave of a greater reputation than Lord Durham's then was. He accepted the post with "inexpressible reluctance"; but he did accept it, and left England in May 1838, accompanied by Charles Buller, as his chief secretary and Chief Commissioner of Crown Lands, and by Wakefield in an official capacity. Lord Durham wished to make Wakefield Commissioner of Crown Lands in Canada, but the Prime Minister

¹ Walpole's *Life of Lord John Russell*.

and the Colonial Secretary, Lords Melbourne and Glenelg, expressed a strong objection and Wakefield received no official post.

It is not the object of the present pages to repeat the oft-told story of Lord Durham's success and failure: success, brilliant and lasting for Canada and for the Colonial Empire of Great Britain; failure, official disgrace, and death from a broken heart for the High Commissioner, abandoned and betrayed by the men who ought to have supported him at home. So far as it can be given in a few sentences, an outline of the Durham-Canada episode is, however, necessary. Immediately on his arrival in Canada, Lord Durham had to deal with the question of what to do with certain rebel leaders, who had confessed their guilt, and were in prison awaiting trial. He issued an Ordinance, 28th June 1838, banishing them to Bermuda. There were other rebels who had fled. The Ordinance decreed that if they returned they should suffer death. The Colonial Secretary at home gave his approval, and Lord Durham also received an autograph letter from Her Majesty signifying her approbation. Practically, in Canada, the Ordinance was a great success. The chief criticism it received there was from the Loyalists, who considered it too lenient. But its practical success weighed for nothing with Lord Durham's enemies at

home. Lord Brougham opened fire with a great attack on his old enemy in the House of Lords on 7th August. He attacked the legality of the Ordinance. Lord Melbourne, instead of defending the man who had courageously and successfully dealt with a difficult situation, weakly gave way, and on 11th August announced that the Ordinance would be disallowed by Her Majesty's Government. Lord Durham is said to have received the first intimation that he had been deserted by his chief from a paragraph in an American newspaper. He immediately returned home, without waiting for his official recall.

Miss Martineau, in her *History of the Thirty Years' Peace*, has given a deeply interesting account of Lord Durham's mission, and it is said that in writing it she was allowed access to a journal kept by Charles Buller during the five months he was in Canada on Lord Durham's staff. That journal, if still in existence, would be an invaluable addition to her history of the Durham mission. Miss Martineau writes as an enthusiastic supporter of Lord Durham. The events of the half-century which has passed since her book was written have justified the estimate she formed of Lord Durham and his detractors. They certainly have not justified the cold severity with which she refers to Wakefield. But she pre-eminently belongs to the ninety-and-nine just

persons who need no repentance, and have no patience with those who do need it. Lord Durham gave Wakefield a book with an inscription, in which he said he had never erred except when he had rejected Wakefield's advice.¹ Wakefield and Buller must always share with Lord Durham the glory of the Canadian settlement. The exact proportion of credit belonging to each will probably never be known, and it is a matter on which they themselves would have been profoundly indifferent: their enthusiasm was for getting the thing done on right lines, rather than for personal glory and renown. Dr. Garnett mentions an epigram current at the time, about the famous Report on Canada, "that Wakefield thought it, Buller wrote it, and Durham signed it." This underestimates the credit due to Lord Durham, but it is certain that Lord Durham's five months' mission to Canada, June to November 1838, would not have had in it the elements of permanent success, now universally acknowledged, if it had not been for Wakefield's years of study given to Colonial questions. John Stuart Mill's share in the credit of the Canadian settlement ought never to be forgotten. Wakefield produced a very considerable effect on his contemporaries: he was a man of an originating mind, and possessed unbounded energy, adroitness and re-

¹ Dr. Garnet's *Life of Wakefield*.

source. But, as may easily be gathered from the letters already quoted, he was not a man to inspire confidence, either intellectually or morally. His greatest admirers must admit that Dr. Garnett is right in labelling his memory with the fatal word "unscrupulous." John Mill had the moral weight which Wakefield lacked, and his intellectual keenness, added to his moral force, gave him an influence over Molesworth and Buller which Wakefield could never have acquired. They made him, wherever he was, a leader of men. He has given an interesting account in his autobiography, pp. 216-17, of his share in directing public opinion upon the value of Lord Durham's policy in Canada, and also to the influence he was able to exercise over Molesworth and Buller.

I had followed the Canadian events from the beginning: I had been one of the prompters of his [Lord Durham's] prompters: his policy was almost exactly what mine would have been, and I was in a position to defend it. I wrote and published a manifesto in the *Review* [*London and Westminster*], in which I took the very highest ground in his behalf, claiming for him not mere acquittal but praise and honour.

Lord Durham's Report is justly looked upon as a Charter of Colonial freedom; it sounded almost for the first time in high places the note of Imperial Responsibility and of Imperial Unity.

It gave no countenance to the craven policy which would misgovern the Colonies to the point of rebellion and then "cut the painter" and leave them to get out as best they could from the confusion and disaster into which the Home Government had helped to plunge them. Lord Durham reached England on 1st December 1838. The Government had taken great pains to direct that no official honours should be shown to him on his arrival. The honours which were shown him were wholly unofficial and spontaneous: addresses, congratulatory meetings, and so forth.

His Report was completed and handed to the Government in February 1839. Wakefield appears to have conceived the idea, whether well or ill founded cannot now be discovered, that the Government intended to bury the Report in the pigeon-holes of the Colonial Office, or at least only to publish fragments of it. To prevent this he communicated it to the press, and it appeared in the *Times* on 8th February 1839.

The Radical hopes that Durham would be the leader they had so long waited for were doomed to disappointment. He died at Dover on his way to the south of Europe on 28th July 1840, aged 48. He had lived long enough to superintend the production of the Report and to devote himself to the instruction of his successor in Canada, Mr. C. Poulett Thompson, afterwards Lord Sydenham.

Sir William Molesworth's share in these great events consisted in the untiring energy with which he devoted himself to the task of educating Parliament and the country upon them. Reference has already been made to his speeches in March 1837 and in January 1838 on the question of Canada. He did not belong to the class of politicians who wait to see "how the cat jumps"; he rather made it his business to make the cat jump the right way. His speech of the 23rd January 1838 is a remarkable performance from every point of view. Hardly a sentence is given to the suspension of the Canadian constitution, which he disapproved, so eager was he to support with all his strength the appointment of Lord Durham as Governor-General and High Commissioner with extraordinary powers. He urged with remarkable foresight that the whole responsibility of the settlement should be left to Lord Durham. He pointed out that the High Commissioner had a task of almost unexampled difficulty to perform: a revolted province to reconcile, the majesty of the law to enforce, the honour and dignity of Great Britain to sustain, a form of free constitution best suited to the wants of the two Canadas to devise. Leave him free, was Sir William's argument, from the control of the Colonial Office and from specific instructions from the Home Government.

Her Majesty's Ministers had selected the person whom they deemed fittest for the office of Governor-General; it would therefore be most absurd to shackle him in any way by the orders of persons who were virtually acknowledged to be less capable than himself. In proportion as Lord Durham was independent of the control of the Colonial Office, or even of Her Majesty's Government, in exactly the same ratio would a probability of a successful termination of these affairs increase.

The speech contains an examination of Canadian grievances. Besides those already referred to, the absence of the control of the purse by the representative chamber and the irresponsible character of the Legislative Council, he mentioned that the House of Assembly had desired to appoint an agent to act for the Colony in England: the Legislative Council had refused to permit it. This Agents Bill had been regularly introduced and passed in the House of Assembly every year for thirty years, and as regularly rejected by the Council. He also drew attention to the fact that the Bill passed in Canada and strongly recommended by the Governor to the Home authorities, for granting permanent salaries to the judges, thus securing their independence, had been disallowed by the Tory Colonial Secretary, Lord Ripon. He complained that the Legislative Council opposed every measure which aimed at securing the independence of the judges.

Instead of the judges holding their offices, as in this country, during good behaviour, they held their appointments during the will of the Crown. . . . Moreover, judges sat upon the bench who were totally unfit for the office. For instance, Mr. Spring Rice, while Secretary for the Colonies, acknowledged that Mr. Gale was an improper person to be a judge, yet Mr. Gale remained in that high and responsible situation.

Another judge, also named, "who was proved to have been drunk on the bench and an habitual drunkard, nevertheless continued to be a judge." The Legislative Council had likewise in 1826 rejected a School Bill, an action which had suddenly deprived 40,000 children of the means of education. In bringing forward these and many other provocative actions which had at last produced armed rebellion, Sir William Molesworth was freely accused of wishing well to the enemies of his country. He repudiated the suggestion with vigour, and said he fully shared in "the generous sentiment of a free people to be most anxious and to take care that wrong should not be done to any one connected with them by blood, and he, for one, should be ready, when it was proved that there was risk of injury to the just rights of his fellow-countrymen in Canada, to support any measure duly calculated to protect those interests and advance their well-being" . . . but he goes on to show that in the important matter of repre-

sentation the English element in Canada had not been satisfied with equal justice. They had secured a representative system which gave them about twice as much electoral power as the French, and were demanding changes which would give them about ten times as much, *i.e.* one representative to every 2600 Englishmen and one to every 24,000 Frenchmen.

The English Canadians seem to have had a good spice of Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger in their constitution, only they had a Home Government over them which with all its faults saved the situation.

In these two speeches which preceded Lord Durham's mission, and in subsequent speeches, Sir William Molesworth thoroughly identified himself with the reform of Colonial administration. Private letters from Wakefield while he was in Canada with Lord Durham, and several from John Stuart Mill on Canada, are among the most interesting in the Pencarrow collection. Lord Durham had heard that Lord Melbourne had thrown him over, and disallowed the Ordinance in September 1838. On 29th September Wakefield was writing to Molesworth. The letter is dated from Quebec.

MY DEAR MOLESWORTH—Just as a messenger is starting to go by the Great Western, Buller gets a letter to say you are very ill. He has a true regard for you,

and is overset by this bad news. Need I tell you that I share his feelings?

Lord D[urham] resigns. You have made sure of it. You would have divided the House of Commons against the dirty Whig-Melbourne Indemnity Bill.

He is mortally but coolly and immovably offended at everything Whig, but (what we should not have expected of him) stifles all feelings of personal anger, and acts with admirable calmness. He has won the respect of these people and the hearts of all America. No other man can settle these affairs. He *must* (who can doubt it?). May you be men enough to enjoy the prospect! For my part, I would not exchange the present prospect for any that could have arisen from the quiet completion of his work *here*.

Buller has been true to his avowed principles. He has ever been the advocate of mercy and justice against policy. Not so I; who have had deeply impressed on me the opinion first suggested by you—that the Canadians are a miserable race, and that this country *must* be made English by one means or another.

They call for my letter. I wish you recovered with all my heart. Of course I go back with Lord D. I hope to reach England by the end of November. If you are well you must come to town for his arrival. It will be a great occasion in English politics. Good-bye, my dear Molesworth.—Believe me, yours most affectionately,
E. G. WAKEFIELD.

The next letter was written immediately after Wakefield's arrival in England. He had preceded Lord Durham by a few days:—

HATCHETTS, *Nov.* 27.

MY DEAR MOLESWORTH—I have received your remarkable letter. It seems as if you had been with us in Canada. Where did you get so true a view of the case?

I shall start by the mail as soon as I hear of Lord D.'s arrival, and will write to you by the post the same day.

Could not you come to Plymouth? No. Woollcombe, I find from Mrs. Buller, is engaged about an address to Lord D.

I do not expect to be able to stay in the West, but would not miss seeing you on any account. Perhaps you will think it right to come to town. . . .

Then follows a paragraph already quoted in appreciation of Sir William Molesworth's Report on Transportation; and he continues:—

Thank God you have not gone into Roebuckism. I almost agree with you about general politics, but not quite. Great events, I think, are not far off. But of all this by-and-bye. . . . Our noble friend Mill is ordered to Malta. His lungs are not organically diseased, but will be if he remains here. He thought till the other day the disease was mortal, but yet fagged away at this Durham case as if he had expected to live for ever.—

Yours most truly,

E. G. WAKEFIELD.

Probably Mr. Mill felt that the prospect of a short life was as great an inducement to industry as he could have. It is not always easy to follow Wakefield's reasoning.

Between the dates of Wakefield's two letters,

on 19th October 1838, Mill was writing to Molesworth mainly about the Review. It strikes one curiously to find Mill, whom many among us remember as the gentlest and most refined of men, writing about "this cursed Canada business." It is one among many instances which the letters already quoted afford of the change in manners between the early and the later years of the nineteenth century. The letter to Sir William contains the following:—

The present turn in Canada affairs brings Lord Durham home, incensed to the utmost (as Buller writes to me) with both Whigs and Tories—Whigs especially, and in the best possible mood for setting up for himself; and if so, the formation of an efficient party of moderate Radicals, of which our Review will be the organ, is certain—the Whigs will be kicked out never more to rise, and Lord D. will be head of the Liberal party, and ultimately Prime Minister.

I am delighted with Buller; his letters to his father and mother and to me show him in a nobler character than he ever appeared in before, and he and Wakefield appear to be acting completely as one man, speaking to Lord D. with the utmost plainness, giving him the most courageous and judicious advice, which he receives both generously and wisely. He is the man for us, and we shall have him and make a man of him yet. . . . There is a great game for you to play in the next session of Parliament. Buller has the best cards in the House of Commons, and I think he will play them well, but yours are the next best. As for me, this has awakened me out

a period of torpor about politics during which my logic has been advancing rapidly. This winter, I think, will see me through the whole of it except the rewriting.

Yours most truly,

J. S. MILL.

Nearly a month later, Lord Durham still being on the high seas on his way to Plymouth, which he reached on 1st December, Mill wrote to Molesworth again :—

INDIA HOUSE,

Nov. 14, 1838.

DEAR MOLESWORTH—What think you of all this impetus in Canada? I find all the Whigs and Moderates re blame Lord Durham for the Proclamation,¹ and he has already the greater part of the real Radicals against him for the Ordinance. But I think the Liberal party in the country generally is with him. I mean to stand by him, as my letters from Buller and Rintoul's from Wakefield convince me that he was quite right in resigning, and that he comes home fully prepared (if the damned pseudo-Radicals do not get round him and talk him over) set up for himself. For the purpose of acting at once on him and upon the country in that *sens (sic)* I have written an elaborate defence of him, which will be published in the Review next week, and will be in the newspapers before that. I hope exceedingly that you will prove of it, for if this man really tries to put himself at the head of the Liberals, your standing by him will do a world of good. . . . Write to me sometimes to say how you are. . . . Ever yours,

J. S. MILL.

¹ On receiving official intimation that the Queen's Government had disavowed his Ordinance, Lord Durham issued a proclamation to the effect that there was now nothing to prevent the return of the prisoners who had been punished by the Ordinance.

Mill's spirited defence of Lord Durham produced a great effect on public opinion in England, and prepared the way for the Report which was soon to follow. Many of the sentences of the Report are curiously applicable to the situation in South Africa at the present day. Lord Durham says:—

I expected to find a contest between a Government and a people—I found two nations warring in the bosom of a single state. I found a struggle, not of principles, but of races ; and I perceived that it would be idle to attempt any amelioration of laws or institutions until we could first succeed in terminating the deadly animosity that now separates the inhabitants of Lower Canada into hostile divisions of French and English.

Such words strengthen the hope that what has been done in about sixty years in Canada is not beyond the powers of statesmanship in Africa.

CHAPTER XI

THE EDITION OF HOBBS AND SIR W. MOLESWORTH'S RETIREMENT FROM PARLIAMENT

SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH'S political activity during 1838 was considerably restricted by bad health. Wakefield refers to the fact that if Molesworth had been able to be in the House, he would have divided it against the measure in which the Melbourne Government threw Durham to the wolves. A letter from Charles Austin to Molesworth, written in November 1838, refers more fully to this illness, and also to a piece of literary work which Sir William was now diligently pursuing, whenever his political engagements allowed him enough leisure, viz. the edition of the works of Hobbes, the philosopher of Malmesbury. The letter illustrates how much Mill and Molesworth had to do in educating even the most enlightened of their own party on the real significance of the Durham-Canada episode. A portion only of the letter is here reproduced :—

CHARLES AUSTIN TO W. MOLESWORTH

Nov. 6, 1838.

I grow more and more tired of politics ; I think I shall one day (and that shortly) give them up, like Lord Durham, in a pet. That Lord has disappointed me and done great mischief—I don't so much mean to Canada, or even to the Ministers, as to the only real Liberal party . . . whom he has convinced of his incapacity for leading, and who are now without a head. He will hardly form a Government, as the phrase is, on his return under these circumstances . . . nor will Buller lead the House of Commons. And yet with common temper and prudence I think he might have led us all one day. . . . They say that Lord Brougham told Lyndhurst the other day that if he could but turn out these fools, he (Lyndhurst) might make himself easy, for that he (Brougham) would go abroad for a year ! A pretty specimen of the motives and egotism of the man.

I hope that you are as careless about politics as I am, and are busy in taking care of your health. I am very glad you have given up the journey to Paris [Sir William had intended going there with the Grotes, but his doctor strongly dissuaded him from the journey, and he gave it up]. It was really a plan more worthy of Lord Durham than of you. There are three reasons why I am anxious that you should live and not die—or, rather, kill yourself : one perhaps you will not value, even if you believe it—it is that I should be personally sorry ; another that I want to see Hobbes completed and on my bookshelves ; the last that you will, if so minded, and take the proper steps, be of great use to Liberal principles and the Liberal party, which God grant.

All this to induce you to mind your health, take exercise and live reasonably.

This to a man of twenty-eight is very significant of a feeble hold on life, which his friends could not but recognise and dread the issue of. But for one who was never robust, and who had suffered in that year from a more than usually severe physical breakdown, Sir William's output of work in 1838 might have put the most healthy of his friends to shame. He had presided over the Parliamentary Committee on Transportation, and marshalled its evidence, and had written, with the exception of a few paragraphs, its report. He had made two very important speeches in the House of Commons on Colonial questions—one on the second reading of the Canada Bill on 3rd January, and one on the state of the colonies on 6th March. Both run to some forty or fifty pages; both are crammed with facts and figures, the verification of which must have entailed days of close application. The first of these speeches has been already referred to; the second was devoted to setting forth the value and importance of Colonial possessions, and combated the then current feeling in the Radical party that the best thing to do was to cut them adrift. He had worked actively as a director of the New Zealand Association to promote in practice the views which he advocated in theory, and he

had made progress with his edition of the works of Hobbes. Not a bad year's work for a valetudinarian! But it will be remembered that when he presented his constituents at Leeds with a reprint of the Report of the Transportation Committee, he excused himself for having been prevented through ill-health from taking so active a part in the business of Parliament as his duties towards them would have rendered desirable. Sir William had engaged permanent and efficient literary assistance to help him with the Hobbes. As originally designed, it was intended to extend to fourteen volumes and to include a life of the philosopher; it really ran to sixteen volumes without the life, which was never written. These volumes are now accepted as the standard edition of Hobbes's works. Sir William spared neither time, labour, nor money to make them as perfect as possible. He is said to have spent £6000 over the edition. "Hobbes" is a very frequent subject in the letters Sir William received from his friends in the year 1838. John Mill wrote in October that he would be happy to give any assistance in his power. Molesworth had evidently asked him if his father had left any essays or other references to the philosophy of Hobbes, published or unpublished; for Mill says that he believes his father's only reference to Hobbes was contained in the fragment on Mackintosh.

Although the references in his own and his friends' letters to the edition of Hobbes do not begin till 1838, Sir William had been at work on it for some time before this. Mrs. Grote says she suggested it to him in 1835 or 1836. The first volume was all but ready for publication by the end of September 1838, and he had then made good progress with the succeeding volumes. On 27th September 1838 he wrote to Mr. Grote to ask permission to dedicate the edition to him, and on the same day another letter to Mrs. Grote to press the same request. The letter to Grote has already been printed in full in Mrs. Grote's *Personal Life of George Grote*, and it is unnecessary to reproduce it here. He speaks of his desire to dedicate the volumes to Grote "as a testimony of admiration and regard." There is a note of weariness in the letter: "My health is somewhat better. . . . I am afraid there is no immediate prospect of any good, and I am very tired of the wearisome broils of political life." The letter to Mrs. Grote of the same date begins with a reference to the proposed visit to Paris, which he afterwards abandoned.

PENCARROW, *September 27, 1838.*

MY DEAR MRS. GROTE—I was wondering why I had not had the felicity of hearing from you, and was about to write to inquire. Sorry I am to hear of Grote's affliction; it is one in which "grin and bear it" is the

only rule of conduct. I shall be at your orders about the 17th November ; but remember I am to be *with you*—lodgings or hotel, I don't care which—but I won't be separated. I should have preferred January, as it would have left me more time for my business before the commencement of Parliament. Charles Austin and his sister came here on Monday ; the former goes away in a day or two ; the latter, I believe, stays. You need be in no alarm. Young ladies don't nowadays die of love, but *fall in love again*, a much more sensible course.¹ I am, as you know, not a marrying man ; I have other things to do, amongst which the most important is my edition of Hobbes. Austin and myself have been discussing this subject with great interest. He intended once to undertake it himself, and has given me much useful information. I find, however, that it is a more serious undertaking than I at first thought. There will be no less than thirteen volumes, not including my life of Hobbes, which will make in all fourteen.² I hope to

¹ This is in reference to some gossip in the circle respecting Miss Austin's feelings for her host and also a rather bitter reminiscence of his own experience.

² The edition of the works of Hobbes was not finished till 1845, and, as already mentioned, extended to sixteen volumes. A presentation copy was sent by Sir William Molesworth to the then Duke of Devonshire, with whose family Hobbes had been so intimately associated. The Duke wrote :—

LONDON, *June 12, 1847.*

SIR—I fear you must think me the most ungrateful person in the world for not having sooner acknowledged the interesting and valuable addition to my library that you have had the goodness to present to me.

Owing to the state of the repairs that my house has been undergoing, the books had been laid by, and it is only to-day, on coming from Chiswick, where I have been staying, that I have seen that magnificent compilation.

I beg you to accept my sincerest thanks. I know not whether you have been to Hardwick ; should it ever suit your convenience to go there, I hope you will let me know the time, and if I should not be able to receive you

have the first volume of Hobbes's works out in January. I have written to-day to Mr. Grote to ask permission to dedicate them to him. I wish for that permission for two reasons—1st, because I shall ever feel the deepest gratitude for the philosophical instruction he gave me when I first knew him, which induced me to study Hobbes and similar authors, and created a taste in my mind for that style of reading; 2nd, because I have a greater regard and esteem for himself and his wife than for any other pair of people in this wicked world.

You can't conceive how agreeable Charles Austin has made himself. . . . He is gone with his sister and Mary to see the coast scenery; I was far too lazy to accompany them, preferring much to enjoy the fancy of being in your society by writing to you. . . . With regard to your gardener, mine, for whom I have the greatest regard, is dying rapidly of a consumption. He cannot by any possibility live over this winter. I am in want of a good one, but he must be really good, able not merely to look after gardens, but understanding plantations, etc. I don't know whether yours will do, and I know how very *base* people generally are in their recommendations when they wish to get an old servant a place. . . . I will send you a list of the volumes of Hobbes. I begin with the second volume, which, together with the three following, and the three first of the Latin, will make a work such as there are but few of in this world. The first volume will come last in publishing, so that I shall have had all the benefit of

there myself, I hope that you would inhabit for a day or two that place, where you would find so many recollections of him whose memory you have done so much to honour.—Believe me, Sir, your much obliged and obedient servant,

DEVONSHIRE.

perusing and re-perusing, studying and re-studying, Hobbes in the correction of the proofs, etc. It will be not much less than a four years' work, and in that time I may produce something not very bad in the shape of a Life.—I am yours affectionately,

WILLIAM MOLESWORTH.

Mr. Grote immediately acceded to Sir William's request in respect of the dedication :—

THREADNEEDLE STREET,

Oct. 2nd, 1838.

MY DEAR MOLESWORTH—Your letter respecting your project of editing Hobbes' works reached me at Burnham on Sunday. I cannot but feel flattered, as well as pleased, at the wish you express to dedicate it to me, and I most willingly consent that you should do so. Our poor friend and instructor, old Mill—*utinam viveret!* he was the man to whom such a dedication would have been more justly due. . . .

In one respect I am a very fit person to have the work dedicated to me ; for I take a warm and anxious interest in its completion and success, not less from my esteem and friendship for the editor than from my admiration of the author edited. If there are any points on which you desire my advice and co-operation, be assured that it will give me sincere pleasure to afford it. You have got a copious and lofty subject, affording scope for every variety of intellectual investigation—embracing morals, politics, and metaphysics, and including even the English Civil War and the Restoration. It is worthy of the most capacious intellect, as well as of the most unremitting

perseverance, and I trust that you will devote labour enough to enable you to do it full justice.

After a reference, partly laudatory and partly critical, to the third volume, then just published, of Comte's *Traité de Philosophie Positive*, Grote continues :—

Our contemporary politics are in a state of profound slumber, from which I fear they are not likely to awake, except to cause us disgust and discouragement. There is nothing in them fit to occupy the attention of a commonplace but sincere patriot, much less of a philosopher.

I congratulate you on having fixed upon a subject which will give you steady intellectual occupation. Sure I am, by my own experience as well as from all other considerations, that you will be much the happier for it.—
Believe me, my dear Molesworth, yours very faithfully,

GEO. GROTE.

This letter shows plainly that Grote, whether regarded as a “commonplace patriot” or as “a philosopher,” had not grasped the great importance of the events which had just taken place in Canada. Sir William Molesworth's strength as a practical statesman was more and more being devoted to the laying of a sound foundation on which to build the Colonial Empire of the United Kingdom. South Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and through them the other Colonies, bear his mark, and are now to-day what they are, largely as the result of his labours and that of the group with whom he

worked. But Grote, to whom at the outset of his political life he had owed so much, could see nothing in the state of contemporary politics worthy the attention of patriot or philosopher. He was longing to be at work again on his *History of Greece*, but Greece as the first great colonising power did not stimulate his interest in the British Colonies, but tended rather to deaden his interest in the living problems of his own day.

This divergence of interest between himself and Sir William Molesworth accounts for their being in less constant association in the House of Commons than heretofore. They still saw a great deal of each other socially, and Mrs. Grote especially made Sir William what she called her "chum and partner." Formerly, when Sir William had desired to quit politics for literature, the Grotes' influence had been put into the political scale; now it was the other way, and in their frequent social intercourse they took advantage of every mood of weariness and irritation, so inevitable to a man of Molesworth's feeble health, to urge the positive desirability of his leaving Parliament to devote himself to literature.

Already, in 1838, Sir William had begun to receive complaints from his constituents relative to the strong line he was taking in Parliament in attacking the Colonial policy of the Government. In May of that year Sir William wrote to his

mother, "I think I am all right again at Leeds, as I find Baines' paper¹ agrees with me on Canada."

He was soon, however, to take a step, right in itself, but fatal to his chances of again successfully contesting the seat. In 1840 the conflicting interests of France and England in Egypt and Syria brought the two countries to the brink of war. The rebellion in Canada in 1838 was probably not without its share in fanning the smouldering enmity between France and England. Besides, in 1840 the long wars by sea and land, ending with the overthrow of Napoleon in 1815, were fresh in the memory of many on both sides of the Channel. At the critical moment, when war trembled in the balance, Sir William Molesworth actively exerted himself to promote peace. He called a peace meeting in Leeds and urged the reasons for friendship with France rather than for war. The war fever had got so far that the leading newspapers were making careful enumerations of the fighting strength by sea and land on both sides. It needed some courage to speak for peace; but courage was what Sir William Molesworth never ran short of. The peace meeting was a success, as success is measured by promoting the immediate object in view; but it was a nail in Sir William's coffin as member for Leeds.

¹ Mr., afterwards Sir Edward, Baines, editor and proprietor of the *Leeds Mercury*, was Sir William's colleague in the representation of Leeds. He also retired, from ill-health, before the General Election of 1841.

John Stuart Mill and Charles Buller wrote enthusiastically to him about the excellent effect produced by the peace meeting. Mill said, writing on 19th November 1840 :—

Your Leeds demonstration seems to me a very proper thing, done in the very best way, and I think that is the general impression about it. I cannot but think it has done, and will do, good both in France and here, and I am sure it has had a good effect in raising your public character.

On 20th November of the same year Charles Buller wrote from London :—

MY DEAR MOLESWORTH—You are an honour to your name, your county, your country, and your species. Your speech at Leeds is one of the sole gleams of common sense that has passed across the shades of our national apathy and bad feeling. Your effort has had no immediate result, not even an echo among the inert cowards of the Radical party. But you have won golden opinions, believe me, from the very people who have been least inclined to praise you hitherto ; and in advocating peace and alliance with France you take a ground on which you may be sure that the great majority will join you sooner or later. One most admirable feature of your speech was that, while it assailed the rascally Whig-Tory *policy*, it kept clear of assailing either *party*, and so lifts you above any charge of *party* purposes.

Sir William wrote enthusiastically to Woollcombe about the success of this peace meeting at

Leeds. After a vehement outburst against the Whigs he writes:—

They left not a stone unturned; everything was against me, municipal elections, weather, etc., every kind of menace and entreaty. I thought up to the last moment they would beat us; fancy my delight in finding eight thousand persons in the Cloth Hall yard waiting to hear me. I spoke for an hour and a quarter, excessively well, in a voice of thunder, to the most attentive audience I ever addressed. You might have heard a pin drop. Every resolution was carried unanimously, not a hand raised or a voice heard against me. Had the meeting been packed instead of being summoned by handbill without an effort to secure a friendly audience, it could not more perfectly have agreed with me. The same might be done in any town in England. Can't you make a stir at Devonport? Such meetings will have a most conciliating effect in France.

I left Leeds at a quarter to seven on Saturday, and reached Pencarrow on Monday evening at six o'clock, 500 miles in less than forty-eight hours, ten of which I rested in London or slept at Ilminster, thus travelling at the rate of 13 miles an hour throughout. I am not much tired. The Grotes are here.—Yours,

WM. MOLESWORTH.

It was, however, one thing to win the applause of Mill and Buller and of the 8000 artisans assembled in the yard of the Cloth Hall, and another to soothe the resentment of the political chiefs in Leeds, who were already offended by the

opposition to the Whig Government shown by their member.

The peace meeting of 1840 completed an alienation which had already produced a strain, and Sir William decided to withdraw from the representation of the town and from Parliament. Grote retired from Parliament at the same time; the diminished Liberal majorities of 1835 and 1837 were entirely swept away by the rising tide of Conservatism, and Sir Robert Peel came into office in 1841 as Prime Minister with a majority of seventy-six. Lord John Russell stood in the place of Grote for the City of London, but only managed to squeeze in with a majority of seven over the highest unsuccessful candidate.¹

Before severing his connection with the House of Commons and with Leeds, Sir William delivered several important speeches on Colonial topics. In June 1839 he seconded Mr. Ward's resolutions on Colonial lands, and dealt with the main points of Wakefield's system—the necessity for bringing labour and capital to develop the natural resources of the Colonies. With this end in view he advocated assisted emigration, taking care to keep the proportion between the two sexes approximately equal. He showed how the transportation system was, in a manner, a realisation of Wakefield's scheme of

¹ Parliament was dissolved in June 1841, and Sir Robert Peel had formed his Ministry at the beginning of September.

bringing labour to the unoccupied Colonial lands, but that it was accompanied by intolerable evils which fatally condemned it. Assisted emigration would possess the economic advantages to the Colonies which had been associated with transportation without its overwhelming moral and social evils. It must be remembered that the rush of emigration to the gold-fields of Australia did not take place till about thirteen years later than the date with which we are now dealing. It of course did all that was needed. As soon as gold was found there was no need to assist emigration, so great was the rush to the gold-fields. It was, however, impossible to foresee this in 1839 and 1840. When Sir William Molesworth first began his work as a Colonial statesman, several colonies were almost wholly dependent on convicts for their supply of labour, and if transportation was to be stopped, it was necessary to devise some other means of encouraging the flow of labour from the old world to the new. This speech of 1839 also contains some interesting passages on scientific sheep-breeding and the experiments which were already in process for improving the quality and weight of the fleeces. Sir William stated that the value of wool exported from New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land to Great Britain had amounted in the previous year (1838) to £600,000, and its weight to 8,000,000 pounds. At the begin-

ning of the century he said that the Australian colonies did not send us a single pound of wool ; they were then supplying about one-seventh of our total import of that commodity, and he ventures on a prophecy : “ I feel persuaded that in less than another half-century, if these colonies be properly managed, our commerce with them in wool alone will exceed our whole trade in that commodity at the present moment.” He was well within the mark ; the 8,000,000 pounds of 1838 had grown to 427,974,038 pounds in 1888, and since that date has reached the enormous total of 541,394,083 pounds (in 1895) out of a total import of 775,379,063 pounds.

Sir William spoke again on Transportation in the House of Commons on 5th May 1840, when he went over the arguments and facts contained in the Report of his Committee—a long exhaustive speech, covering seventy-six pages of print, showing the evils of the system from every point of view and the necessity of its entire abolition. He had given a more general and discursive speech to his constituents in Leeds in the previous February, “ On the State of the Nation ” ; he calls attention to the condition of the working classes, the riots in Birmingham, rebellion in Wales, Chartism growing up in every part of the country ; and he shows that although the outward and visible signs of this unrest might be put down by the police or

by military force, "yet the cause of the disease remains untouched and will produce fresh convulsions unless a searching remedy be applied to it." He then inquires into the causes and finds them in the ignorance and misery of the great masses of the people. He advocates as remedies, first, abolition of the corn laws which would bring cheap food to the hungry ; second, assisted emigration and colonisation ; and third, "most important of all," national education. This is a mere outline, filled in by Sir William with graphic details which can be read with interest even now, sixty years after they were spoken, especially in those passages where he refers to the Colonies and his hopes and anticipations for their future. With his accustomed honesty and straightforwardness he said that while sympathising with the working classes in their desire to possess the parliamentary suffrage, he did not anticipate that the vote in itself would improve the economic position of the people or tend to allay the discontent occasioned by want. He spoke against the Chartists and their attacks on property and their appeal to physical force, and called them "the worst enemies of progressive reform." The speech shows Sir William at his best : ardent for reform, going to the root causes of the evils he attacked ; outspoken and honest in telling a popular audience where he thought they were following false leaders. He had at this date

no positive intention of retiring from the representation of Leeds, as the conclusion of the speech will show :—

Now, gentlemen, but one word more before I sit down, with regard to what I may call our personal affairs. I became your representative at the express wish of a large body of the electors. As long as you approve of my general conduct and votes in Parliament, so long do I wish to be your representative. [Great cheering.] I told you on the hustings that until triennial Parliaments became the law of the land, I should be ready to resign my seat whenever you might express a desire to that effect. [No, No.] I repeat that promise on the present occasion. [Loud cheers.] In the event of a dissolution, I shall be ready to stand again ; I shall be most proud to be your representative if you still wish me to fill that high and responsible office. [Vociferous cheering.] But if, on the other hand, you prefer any other person either in this town or elsewhere [reiterated cries of “No, No,” which prevented the hon. baronet from proceeding]. Gentlemen, I feel extremely gratified by this expression of your approbation. I wish, however, to speak not merely to you, who approve of my conduct, but to the whole of this great constituency, and let them decide upon the course they may think proper to adopt. That is the reason I speak in this manner, for I must feel that if all were like you, there could be no doubt on the subject. I say, on the other hand, if there is any other person, either in this town or elsewhere, that you prefer, distinctly state the fact to me, let there be no false delicacy on the subject, and I assure you that I will at once withdraw. For I should be grieved to see the representation of this

great town fall into the hands of the Tories. [Loud cheers.] It has been rumoured, I know not whether correctly or not, that some of my votes have given dissatisfaction to some persons who supported me at the last election. If this be the case, I cannot help it. I have always acted, and intend to act, upon my own independent convictions, and upon no other terms will I consent to sit in Parliament or take part in public life. [Immense cheering.] I will neither be so obstinate, nor so presumptuous as to assert that I may not have at times committed errors of judgment [hear, hear]—but I will assert that I have always endeavoured to act in accordance with those principles which I professed to you on the hustings. On those same principles I shall continue to act, if you again return me to the House of Commons. [We will, we will.] If not, I shall retire—[No, No] I shall retire without sorrow to private life, always feeling grateful for the favours you have shown me, and considering it to be one of the events in my public career, of which I may be most proud, that I have represented for several years the electors of this great and important city. [Great cheering, clapping of hands and waving of handkerchiefs, the whole of the company rising from their seats as the hon. baronet sat down.]

Even now the people who attend meetings are not always those who have votes and use them; but the discrepancy between the voice of the people in public meeting and as expressed in the polling-booth was still more marked in the time when the £10 householders were supreme. This enthusiastic meeting in February 1840 was followed in

November by the meeting in favour of a peaceful settlement of our differences with France, and it was chiefly because of this that Molesworth felt that he could not retain his hold on the constituency and that his best course was to retire without seeking re-election.

CHAPTER XII

1841-45—LIFE AT PENCARROW—MARRIAGE

ALL his life Sir William Molesworth was an enthusiastic horticulturist and lover of trees. Cornwall is a county of beautiful gardens; and Pencarrow is an Eden even among the gardens of Cornwall. It was very largely Sir William's creation. The Italian garden on the south side of the house, one blaze of colour from early spring till late autumn, has a fountain in the centre, placed there by him, fashioned after the model of that in the Piazza Navona in Rome. This garden is slightly sunk, and the grounds, covered with beautiful trees, rise gently round three sides of it, affording, with the house, shelter from every gale that blows. A small stream has been dexterously led down one of the sloping banks, and there bamboo and other half-tropical plants flourish luxuriantly in the mild Cornish air. The rockery is one of the striking features of the Pencarrow garden. It is formed of huge blocks of unquarried

granite brought from the Cornish moorlands, and piled up in excellent imitation of the natural tors of Dartmoor or the Cheesewring of Caradon Hill. In a letter, probably of 1837, Sir William wrote to his sister, Mary, to express his delight at being once more at home after the turmoil of politics and elections. He says that the calm tranquillity of Pencarrow will soon restore him to "indifference to all terrestrial things," an unconscious tribute from its master that to him Pencarrow did not take rank with things terrestrial. He adds:—

I am delighted with the rock-work, which Corbet has executed with great skill and ability. It accurately resembles nature, so that a stranger would easily fancy it real. The dogs are quite well, Gurth and Brenda [mastiff and bloodhound respectively] as fat as pigs. The former honoured me by jumping up behind my chair at breakfast and putting his arms round my neck. Blacky paid me a visit at dinner-time and expressed with calm dignity his satisfaction at seeing me, at least so I interpreted the expression of his countenance.

The Pencarrow rockery has political and personal associations. When Sir William retired from the representation of East Cornwall, he did so because the leading Whig gentlemen in the constituency had withdrawn their support. But the humbler class of voters remained faithful, and, when he retired, were anxious to do something to show their continued loyalty and affection. The build-

ing of the rock-work afforded them the opportunity they desired. Every small farmer and tradesman in the neighbourhood who possessed a cart and horse lent them for the purpose of transporting the blocks of granite from the surrounding moorlands to Pencarrow.

The collection of rare conifers at Pencarrow is famous. Kew speaks respectfully of Pencarrow, and has been known to ask for seeds and specimens. Varieties which can with difficulty resist the sterner air of Middlesex thrive and grow in the mild, moist Cornish climate and in the suitable habitat selected for them by Sir William, who superintended the planting of nearly every tree. Sir William's sister, Mrs. Ford, the present owner, has been awarded the Knightsian medal by the Royal Horticultural Society for the best collection of coniferous trees in England. The plantations comprise almost every hardy specimen of yew, fir and cypress.

There are perfect groves of araucarias of various kinds, which have grown to be graceful forest trees. Some of the rarer species of araucaria were grown successfully in the open air at Pencarrow for the first time in England; and the name, monkey puzzle, by which the whole genus are now commonly known, was given to them by Sir William's friend, Charles Austin. He was looking on as one of them was being planted, and remarked :

“That tree would puzzle a monkey.” The phrase took, and the tree has been known as the monkey tree or monkey puzzle ever since. Those whose knowledge of araucarias is confined to specimens four or five feet high planted in the front gardens of suburban villas, wretched little trees which look as if they had been cut out of tinfoil and painted a dirty green, should see the avenues of araucarias at Pencarrow before they condemn the tree as ugly.

Sir William did his planting, as he did everything else, very thoroughly and methodically. A large folio book was kept by him containing the name of every tree planted ; the date of planting ; its size when planted ; its average growth per year in its own country ; the anticipated growth per year in England ; and, finally, its actual growth year by year at Pencarrow. A glance at this book was therefore sufficient to show how each tree was flourishing and whether it was doing as well as, or better than, had been expected.

Careful observation of natural objects of constant recurrence, such as rainfall, direction and velocity of wind, the effect of temperature on plant life, etc., was by no means as common in the early part of the nineteenth century as it has since become. Sir William's aunt, Miss Caroline Molesworth, his father's sister, was very interested in observations of this kind, and it may have been through her that Sir William became a scientific

botanist. From 1825, for forty years, Miss Caroline Molesworth devoted herself to careful observations, duly recorded in her journals, of plant life as influenced by the weather. At her death in 1872 she left her manuscripts, containing over 75,000 distinct observations, to the Meteorological Society, in whose library they are known as the Cobham Journals. The editing of this immense mass of notes was entrusted by the Society to Miss Eleanor A. Ormerod, to whom it was a labour of several years to formulate the results of Miss Molesworth's observations.¹

Sir William, therefore, probably had an inherited enthusiasm for garden lore. From his earliest years his letters to his own family contain constant references to his trees, his flowers, and his dogs, especially to Brenda, a much-beloved mastiff. He writes for instance from London about a bag of acorns he is sending down, with directions about their planting; another letter contains anxious inquiries about his trees; a third, which describes a visit to a famous nursery garden, so well conveys his enthusiastic love for flowers and plants that it is here quoted at length:—

LONDON, *Wednesday* [probable date 1842].

MY DEAR MARY—Yesterday I went with Woollcombe to Lodige's nursery gardens at Hackney. When I entered the gardens I was astonished at the sight. It

¹ See *Times*, 12th May 1880.

seemed to me I was on the premises of some half-ruined engineer : covered with decayed buildings, beastly dirty, glass stained with perpetual smoke of London, never washed, never repaired, but patched in every conceivable manner. The outward semblance was most disgusting, but what was the interior ? All the riches, all the vegetable pride of the tropics was there collected : palms fifty feet high ; ferns with their magnificent foliage in thousands ; orchidious plants in tens of thousands ; some most beautiful flowers, filling me with envy and desire of possession. It was indeed a new world—its splendour marred, however, by a superabundance of beauty and riches ; for there were plants enough to have filled a hundred times the space ; and here they were so closely packed that the attention was distracted. The ferns pleased me most, especially one from Madeira, which unfortunately Lodige said he had never been able to propagate. From the tropics we passed to the more temperate climes ; there I was much struck by his beautiful small specimen plants of the various firs ; they were complete trees in miniature about two feet high, forming beautiful plants for a conservatory. From them we went to his collection of camelias ; their beauty had begun to diminish, yet still they surpassed anything that my imagination could have dreamt of. Woollcombe said that Price's collection at Exeter was nothing compared to it. For instance, on one plant alone, about fifteen feet high, we calculated that there were in full flower two thousand of the most beautiful camelias. It was indeed a sight worth seeing, and I am much obliged to Corbet [the gardener at Pencarrow] for having sent me there. Tell him so, and read him what I said. I did not buy anything, as I did not know what to buy.

—Your affectionate brother, WM. MOLESWORTH.

In a later letter (1844) to his sister he writes about flowers then coming into blossom at Pencarrow with the minute particularity of one who knows each plant individually.

Four more flowers of the *Nelumbium* are coming out. The *Sarauja* is going to be covered with flower. I send you a specimen. . . . The *Ipomœa Lœni* has flowered beautifully in the greenhouse where the creepers grow, which, with passion flowers and other creepers, is very gay. The Japan lilies, especially the dark purple ones, are now magnificent.

Friends who stayed with him still speak of the hours Sir William spent among the orchids and other plants ; and one of the Pencarrow caricatures represents him setting forth garden-wards with abnormally thin legs and with the pockets of his shooting-jacket stuffed out on either side with seeds and other garden stuff. His habit of spending his spare time in the hot-houses rather than in taking exercise in the open air probably explains Charles Austin's vigorous injunction (see Chap. XI.) to "mind your health, take exercise and live reasonably."

One of the charms of Pencarrow is its marvelous rookery. Towards sunset rooks fill the sky, arriving in cohorts from all points of the compass. It is said to be their central meeting-place for twenty miles round. They literally darken the sky. Looking up into the mass of whirling black

specks, one and the same simile forces itself on every one; it is exactly like a black snowstorm.

When Sir William retired from the representation of Leeds, he was able to say to his constituents, with perfect truth, that he withdrew “without sorrow to private life.” He had heard Pencarrow calling “all the time he was plunged in political and other business,” and what Wakefield called “slothful Pencarrow” was indeed a haven of repose and tranquillity, and also a place where he could work at subjects which interested him and called out some of those faculties of his mind which were left dormant while he was absorbed by political strife in London. In an early letter to his mother, written about the middle of his first session, he speaks of having breathed comparatively pure air while staying with the Grotes at Dulwich, and adds, “it fills me with a wish to visit Cornwall. God knows when that pleasure will be accorded me.” Now, in 1841, no longer a member of Parliament, with Hobbes to edit, and with Pencarrow to live in, his feeling was one of delight and relief. He wrote to Mrs. Grote, who had gone with her husband to Italy:—

September 1841.

I am living a life of the most tranquil repose: reading mathematics, studying the undulatory theory of light, enjoying my garden when God permits . . . delighted at being free from the turmoil of politics;

Mrs. Grote encouraged and fostered the *sauvagerie* she appeared to condemn ; just as people are always pleased to show that a savage dog, fierce with all the rest of the world, is gentle to them. There is certainly nothing in the contemporary references to Sir William Molesworth by Carlyle, Charles Austin, John Mill, Wakefield, and other of his intimate friends, to show that he really was indifferent to gaining the goodwill and affection of those with whom he associated.

The Grotes stayed at Pencarrow in 1840 and again in 1843. After the first visit Sir William wrote, 16th December 1840, with cordial appreciation to Mrs. Grote, of the pleasure afforded by her sojourn in Cornwall. The letter begins :—

I hope you have arrived safe and sound in London, not the worse for your tour in the West, where you have left an imperishable reputation, and won all hearts. I saw most of the gentry on Thursday last, when we had a public meeting to address the Queen on her having blessed the nation with an offspring.

That Mrs. Grote was not indifferent to such compliments is proved by the letter being annotated in her writing : “I have left an imp : reputaⁿ, etc.” Mrs. Grote has given a very lively account of the second visit in 1843 in her *Personal Life of George Grote*. Charles Austin and Monckton Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton) were of the party, and they were

received by Lady Molesworth and Miss Molesworth as well as by Sir William. Mrs. Grote describes the perpetual flow of talk on all matters, from grave to gay, from lively to severe, during the fortnight the visit lasted. "Our host played his part to admiration, whilst the ladies found the topics neither heavy nor tedious, though often profound and learned, and the daily dinner-hour ever found us eager to renew the friendly fray of the morning." Sir William Molesworth, she says, "brought to the general fund a vast stock of knowledge and illustrated his views by resources of a character somewhat out of the course of reading of the rest of the party." The Grotes quitted Cornwall under the impression that Sir William had for ever said farewell to politics and would devote the rest of his life to science and literature. He was still deep in Hobbes, and the Grotes thought that the activity of his mind would be fully satisfied for several years to come by the study of the subjects which would need to be treated of when he began to write the life he had so long had in contemplation. It was the tendency of the Grotes, though not a peculiarity, to judge of others by themselves. Grote was now almost wholly absorbed by his *History of Greece*, and "never deviated from his system of daily labour" upon it. The legends and myths of the Athenian gods and the laws of Lycurgus in

Sparta were more to him than the repeal of corn laws, national education, or the building of a British Colonial Empire upon sound foundations. The Grotes never really understood their friend, nor perceived how his interest in historical antiquity only sharpened his desire to grapple with the practical problems of his own day. It was inevitable with such a nature as Sir William Molesworth's that when he had enjoyed a period of tranquil study and rest at Pencarrow, he should wish to rest no longer, but to do something in the world besides writing books. It was not an ignoble ambition. It must be remembered that it was the "damned feend" who tempted the Red Cross Knight with thoughts of perpetual rest :—

What if some little payne the passage have
 That makes frayle flesh to feare the bitter wave,
 Is not short payne well borne, that bringes long ease,
 And layes the soull to sleepe in quiet grave?
 Sleepe after toyle, port after stormie seas,
 Ease after warre, death after life, does greatly please.

Færie Queene, Canto ix. v. 40.

This, as Spenser tells us, is the voice of the tempter. Few there are who have not heard it.

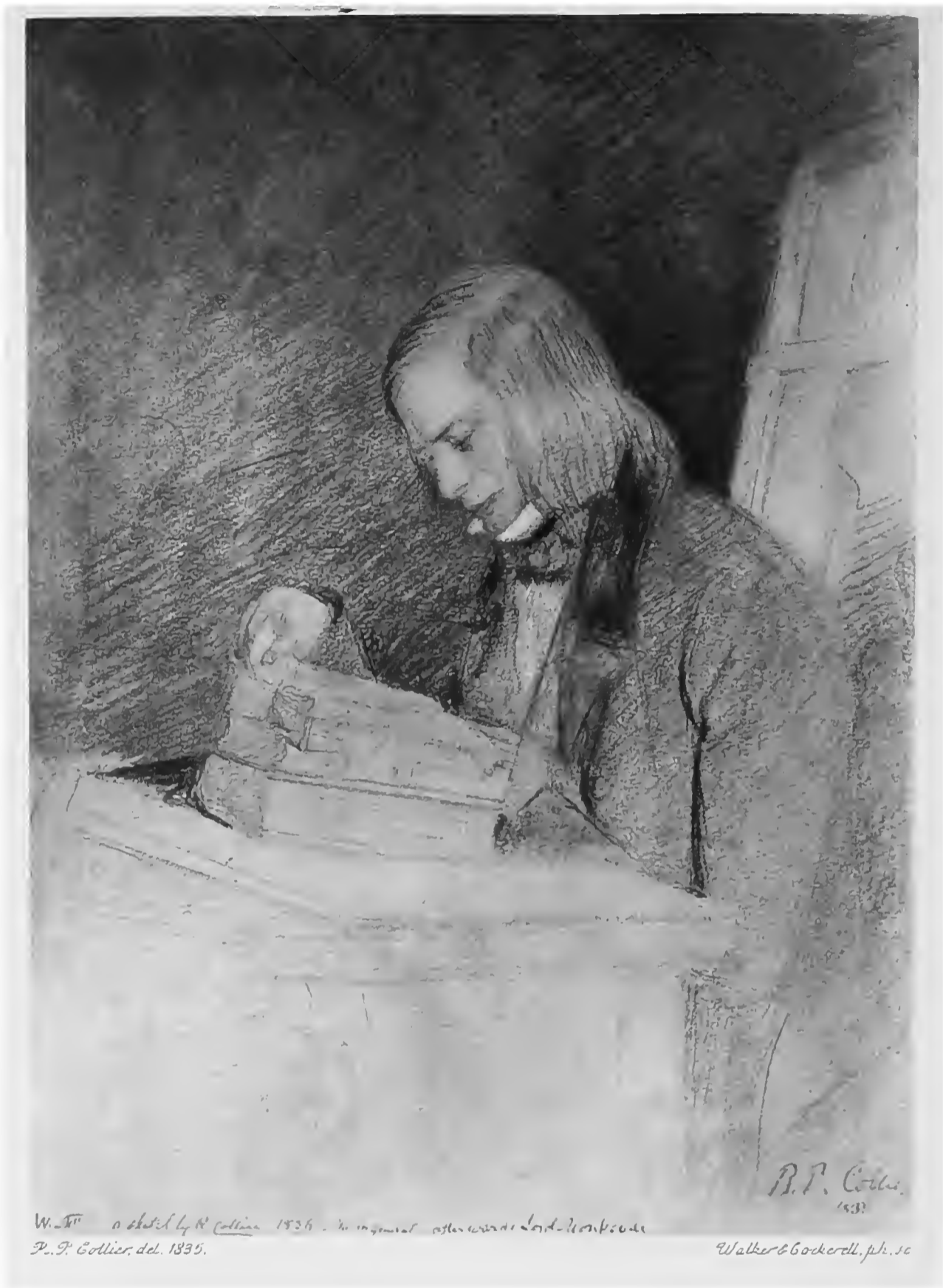
But perpetual rest was not an ideal that could long please a man like Sir William Molesworth, and quiet study to him was rest. His temper of mind about his studies and his desire to turn them

into some channel of practical usefulness are apparent almost from the beginning of his retirement from Parliament in June 1841. In a letter dated November of the same year he begins with a grumble :—

Nine to ten hours a day I occupy in reading, the rest in those ordinary occupations that are required for the maintenance of life. What miserable brutes we are to be compelled to employ one-half of our existence in keeping ourselves alive.

He then speaks of his studies, his reading of the whole of Comte for a third time, “with the determination to understand every general proposition in the first two volumes.” He continues :—

I begin to feel sometimes that I am becoming a mathematician, and subjects which I formerly found difficult now appear easy. In short, I am conscious of mental progress, though, alas ! not so rapid a one as I could wish. My object, however, is not to be a mathematician, but to imbue myself with the methods of investigating truth so as to be a general thinker. For this purpose, and as a discipline of the mind, the vigorous study of some specific branch of knowledge is most beneficial, provided care be taken at the same time not to allow the methods of that particular science to obtain an undue preponderance over the intellect. I am well aware, better perhaps than most men, of the errors in philosophising into which mathematicians are apt to fall, and hope to escape them. In studying mathematics my



Sir William Moleworth, Bart. M.P.

object is not so much the conclusions arrived at by the great mathematicians, as the *methods* by which they arrived at them ; a study therefore, not of mathematics, etc., but of the human mind about mathematics.

Even from the first, then, it may be gathered that he looked upon study not as an end in itself, but for the sake of the practical uses to which a mind trained by study could be turned.

It was about this time that Behnes the sculptor modelled a very successful portrait bust of Sir William. Two copies in marble were executed. One is now at Pencarrow ; the other was presented to the Grotes ; after Mr. and Mrs. Grote were both dead, it became the property of Mrs. Ford, who presented it in 1898 to the Canadian Parliament : it now stands in the library of the House of Representatives at Ottawa, where it commemorates Sir William Molesworth's honourable part in the statesmanship which has made the Colonial Empire of Great Britain such a source of strength to her.

One of Sir William's possessions at Pencarrow was a carved oak pulpit said to have been one from which Martin Luther had preached. It was placed in one of the libraries, and Sir William constantly used it, as a sort of desk, to read and write at. The accompanying sketch by his friend Mr. R. P. Collier, afterwards Lord Monkswell, shows him at work in this pulpit.

In 1842 Sir William lost by death the elder of his two brothers, Mr. Arscott Ourry Molesworth. He died at Fareham in Hampshire, aged 28. Francis Molesworth was at that date doing well in New Zealand, and Sir William wrote very hopefully of his prospects; these hopes were, however, destined not to be fulfilled in consequence of the accident already referred to which led to his death in 1846.

In the summer of 1844 Sir William Molesworth was spending some months with his mother and sister in London; at his mother's house and elsewhere in society he met a lady, Mrs. Temple West, the widow of a Worcestershire gentleman; he was very much attracted by her from the first, and in July of that year she became his wife. Surviving friends of Andalusia, Lady Molesworth, describe her as having exceedingly gentle, caressing manners; her ambition was to attain the position of a social leader, and her house became the centre of the most fashionable society in London. The contrast in every respect between her and Mrs. Grote was as marked as well could be. There is nothing "caressing" about "Got your homily. Deuced dull concern," etc., and it is not difficult to understand the charm which his wife's gentle manners exercised over Sir William. Lady Molesworth's birth was humble. Before her first marriage she had been on the stage. Mrs.



*The Right Hon. Sir William Molesworth, Bart.
from the Bust by Behnes in Parliament House, Ottawa.*

Grote's Radicalism did not impair her sense of the value of birth, or her conviction that she was herself a member of one of the most ancient and distinguished of families. Unfortunately the two ladies regarded each other with no friendly eye, and Sir William found that he must make his choice between his wife and his old friend. He naturally chose his wife, and in October 1844 wrote Mr. Grote a sharp note telling him that as Mrs. Grote had been making ill-natured remarks about Sir William's wife, the friendship which had existed between them must come to an end. Charles Austin tried, in a very charming letter, to act the part of a peacemaker. He wrote :—

Now, my dear Mrs. Grote, as I do not and never shall intend to break with W. Molesworth, I think it hardly fair that you should. It is cooled, interrupted, if you please ; not at an end. . . . I undertake to set this matter right myself, and you will all be glad to find that old and intimate friendships are not so easily broken. It is one of the high privileges of such friendships to censure, to neglect, to quarrel—*without* coming to an end.

It is true that one of my maxims in life is never to quarrel, and never to take, however I may give, offence. And I hope this maxim of my practical philosophy will be as acceptable to you in time as all the rest, to all and each of which I find you successively acceding, the reason being, of course, that I am always in the right.

I will treat you to a new one—never to desire the unattainable, nor to regret the inevitable. That is worth all the maxims in your books of ethics put together, provided you can but act upon it with tolerable pertinacity.

These well-meant efforts had no result. The old friends never met again. They were both to blame. As Charles Austin said, a friendship like theirs ought not to have been extinguished by what Mrs. Grote always protested was a misunderstanding. Grote and Sir William formally exchanged presentation copies of their respective works, but the old familiar friendship was extinguished.

CHAPTER XIII

SOUTHWARK ELECTION, 1845, AND SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH'S POSITION ON QUESTIONS OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

FROM the General Election of 1841 for the next five years the great political question of the day was the repeal of the Corn Laws.

Sir Robert Peel's Conservative majority in 1841 had been returned to support Protection, but in 1844 there were signs that the Prime Minister and the ablest of his following were becoming converted to the principles of Free Trade. From the beginning of his political life Sir William had been in favour of Free Trade, including the entire abolition of the Corn Laws. He and the Parliamentary group to which he belonged, Grote, Hume, Leader, Villiers, Roebuck, etc., had in 1836 formed an Anti-Corn Law Association, but from want of really efficient practical leadership they made no great way in

imp

X | converting the main body even of their own party to share their views. In 1837 Cobden, who was not yet in Parliament, made Sir William Molesworth's acquaintance. They met for the first time at the Grotes' house. Cobden wrote his first impressions in his journal :—

I met at their [the Grotes'] house (which, by the way, is the great resort of all that is clever in the Opposition ranks) Sir W. Molesworth, a youthful, florid-looking man of foppish and conceited air, with a pile of head at the back (firmness) like a sugar-loaf. I should say that a cast of his head would furnish one of the most singular illustrations of phrenology. For the rest he is not a man of superior talents, and let him *say* what he pleases, there is nothing about him that is democratic in principle.¹

X | Cobden evidently did not at first sight appreciate the mental and moral *calibre* of his younger contemporary, but he was not long in forming a juster estimate, for three months later he wrote a long letter to Sir William upon a project which he had in mind to employ a lecturer to go through the North of England towns giving addresses on the Ballot, Education, Free Trade, and other political and economic topics. He turned for help in carrying out this plan to Sir William Molesworth, and the letter concludes :—

I trust you will excuse my thus troubling you at such

¹ Morley's *Life of Cobden*, vol. i. p. 137.

length. I have written to Mr. Grote on the same subject ; it is one with which his name is always associated. He is, I learn, on the Continent, and to yourself I naturally next direct myself for counsel and assistance upon this question of questions.

The force and vigour of the Manchester School of Free Traders, aided by the circumstances of the time, notably by the disastrous famine in Ireland, had turned the pious opinion in favour of Free Trade held by the philosophic Radicals of 1832 into a burning political question. During the greater part of the time when this transformation and the gradual conversion of Sir Robert Peel and his Ministry were being effected, Sir William Molesworth was out of Parliament and devoting his time to the edition of Hobbes. In 1845 he determined to re-enter Parliament and take part in the final overthrow of the Corn Laws, as well as to continue his efforts for religious equality, national education, and Colonial reform. A vacancy took place in the representation of Southwark. Sir William Molesworth offered himself as the Radical candidate, and was elected on 13th September 1845. His address, dated from 1 Lowndes Square, 14th August 1845, gives a clear summary of his political views, including support of the ballot, triennial parliaments, extension of the suffrage, and abolition of the property qualification for members of Parliament.

He appeals to his votes and conduct during the nine years he had sat in Parliament, and adds—

On every occasion I supported, either by my votes or speeches, the principles of Free Trade, and I may boast that I was one of the first persons who declared themselves, in the House of Commons, for a total repeal of the Corn Laws.

If elected, he declared his intention to devote himself to education, to Colonial reform, to justice to Ireland, and to all measures calculated to extend commerce by the removal of the fetters of Protection.

There were peculiar circumstances connected with this election which render it necessary to do more than simply state the result of the poll. Besides his Conservative opponent, he had also to meet with the opposition of a third candidate, a Liberal like himself, whose votes on most House of Commons questions would be identical with his own, and whose opposition was based on differences relating to religious equality and religious opinions. In the session of 1845 the Peel Government had carried a Bill for changing the character and enlarging the amount of the annual Parliamentary grant to the Roman Catholic Training College for priests at Maynooth. Up to this time, an annual grant of £8928, dating from Grattan's Parliament of 1795, had been

voted in the Estimates: it was seldom allowed to pass without an acrimonious debate. Sir Robert Peel in 1845 proposed and carried a Bill to raise the annual amount granted to Maynooth to £26,000,¹ in addition to a gift of one sum of £30,000 for building purposes; the Bill also provided that the grant hereafter should be charged on the Consolidated Fund, and not therefore be subject to the annual vote of the House of Commons. This Bill was strongly opposed by two sections of opinion in England—the extreme High Churchmen and the Nonconformists. Though they represented two very different and even hostile camps, the root of their objection was the same—the grant by the State to a Church had the effect of making the Church dependent on and subject to the State; and in opposition to this High Churchmen and Nonconformists joined hands. Mr. Gladstone withdrew from Sir Robert Peel's Government on account of the Maynooth Bill, because he felt it was inconsistent with the principles he had enunciated in his book *The State in its Relations with the Church*, though probably no one but Mr. Gladstone could appreciate the difference in principle between the smaller vote, in which he had acquiesced, and the larger charge on the Consolidated Fund, which he

¹ This annual payment was commuted in 1869, when the Irish Church was disestablished, by payment of a capital sum of £364,000.

entirely condemned.¹ There was a great outburst against Peel's measure from the extreme Protestant "No Popery" party, whose agitation Macaulay referred to as "the bray of Exeter Hall" and "the war-whoop of the Orangemen." When Sir William presented himself before the constituency of Southwark, he was asked his opinion on the Maynooth Bill. It would have been easy for him to have sheltered himself behind the fact that the Bill had been passed when he was out of Parliament; it would have been easy, that is to say, if he had been as invertebrate as most Parliamentary candidates; but to him it was impossible. He avowed in the most open manner that had he been in Parliament he would have supported Sir Robert Peel's Bill. The political dissenters in Southwark violently assailed him, but this had no other effect than to cause him as plainly and clearly as words could do so to explain the principles which actuated him on this and similar questions. At his speech at the nomination on 10th September 1845, he gave his reasons for his approval of the Maynooth Bill.

The great majority of the Irish nation have adhered to the religion of their forefathers and are still Catholics.

¹ Macaulay put this point with his accustomed clearness: "It is clear to me," he said in the House of Commons, "that if we have no religious scruple about granting to this college £9000 for one year, we ought to have no religious scruple about granting £26,000 for an indefinite term." —*Macaulay's Speeches*, p. 373.

The piety of those ancestors bequeathed vast property for the maintenance of the Catholic religion, and for the instruction of the Catholic priests. That property has been alienated, not to the uses of the State, nor for the benefit of the whole Irish nation, but to the support of a religion which seven-eighths of the people utterly disbelieve. As some slight compensation, perhaps, for this great wrong, the Irish Parliament granted a small sum of money, not to maintain the Irish priests, but to educate them, to render them fit for the performance of their duties. After the Union of Great Britain and Ireland, this grant was considered as a sort of contract ; it was continued from year to year ; it had become inadequate for its purpose ; and last year it was proposed to make it sufficient. Now, I ask, could the House of Commons, with propriety, have rejected such a proposal ? Would not the refusal of this grant have been considered as tantamount to a declaration of hostility towards Ireland ? Would not that have confirmed the assertion of the agitator, that there was no justice to be obtained from England ? Would not that have lent force to the cry for repeal of the Union ? I answer, it would. I am opposed to the repeal of the Union, no one more so ; but then I say, do justice to Ireland—destroy her monster Church—the reproach of England—and when you have done this, then and not till then, refuse this small grant to Maynooth.

The opposition of the political dissenters to Sir William's candidature did not concentrate itself solely on his views on the Maynooth Bill. Sir William's edition of Hobbes was by this time nearly complete, and had been a good deal talked

of in literary circles. There were probably not a dozen voters in Southwark who knew anything about Hobbes; but among the dozen were some Nonconformist ministers whose whole political energies were concentrated on an attack on the union of Church and State. Now, without even a distant acquaintance with the fourteen volumes of Hobbes' writings, it was not difficult to discover that his influence had been exerted in a direction the exact contrary to that for which the Nonconformists were labouring. Hobbes was in politics a strong Tory, and he had given the weight of his authority to the supremacy of the State over the Church. He had urged that the preservation of social order, so recently disturbed in his time by the Civil War, "must depend on the assumption by the civil power of the right to wield all sanctions, supernatural as well as natural, against the pretensions of any clergy—Catholic, Anglican, or Presbyterian—to the exercise of an *imperium in imperio*." ¹ In a word, Hobbes was an Erastian. The electors of Southwark would not have understood what "Erastian" meant. It was considered justifiable by those who ought to have known better to use the word "infidel" instead; and to attempt to label Molesworth, as the editor of Hobbes, with the same epithet. This party was represented in the election by Mr.

¹ *Encyclopædia Britannica*, art. "Hobbes."

Edward Miall, who came forward as a second Radical candidate. Mr. Miall was well known for the vehemence of his opposition to a State Church; he had founded the Liberation Society, and was the editor of a weekly newspaper called *The Nonconformist*. This paper displayed as its motto the words, "The dissidence of dissent and the Protestantism of the Protestant religion." Mr. Miall was a strong Radical outside of theological questions. He sympathised with the Chartists, advocated manhood suffrage, annual parliaments, and payment of members. In comparison with him, Sir William's politics were almost Whiggish in their moderation. Sir William had only supported household suffrage and triennial parliaments; he had opposed and condemned the Chartists; now his opponent came forward with a far more extreme programme, and into the bargain endeavoured to label Sir William, as the editor of Hobbes, with the name of Infidel. Wherever he went in the constituency, Sir William was met by the absurd cry of "No 'Obbes" from people who knew as much of Hobbes as they knew of Egyptian hieroglyphics. Sir William dealt with the matter in a characteristic fashion; he sent a copy of his edition of Hobbes to every one of his committee rooms all over the constituency, and then challenged those who called Hobbes an infidel to discover one word in any of his

writings in the least degree hostile to Christianity. He and Mr. Miall met face to face on the hustings the day before the election. These picturesque encounters can never take place now ; the incident deserves to be recalled as a specimen of what election-speaking was in the old days of the hustings and open voting. After a general expression of his opinions on free trade, religious liberty, the emancipation of the Jews, the grant to Maynooth, and a brief reference to the Tory candidate, Sir William turned to his other opponent :—

Now a few words to the friends of Mr. Miall and to that gentleman himself. Many amongst you, I know, are honest and sincere men, for whose character I entertain unfeigned respect. Between your opinions and mine the practical difference has always appeared to me to be of small amount. I have therefore from the beginning of this contest deeply regretted the division which exists between us. I wished that our united forces should do battle to the common enemy. I offered to agree to any fair compromise. I offered to retire from the field if I were the weaker, and to give all the assistance in my power to your candidate. Those offers your candidate rejected, and the contest went on. Still I hoped that no angry feelings would arise between us. I trusted we should abstain from personalities towards each other, and that this would be a calm contest of reason. In these hopes I have been disappointed, and for that disappointment I am not to blame. Not one word of disrespect, not one syllable of reproach, did I utter against your

candidate until I was assailed. [A gentleman on the platform here called out "Reverend."] What! do you call that a term of reproach? I say that I did not strike the first blow. You, Mr. Miall, quitted the high ground of argument. You descended into the arena of abuse. You accused me of dishonesty on account of my opinions with regard to Maynooth. You taxed me with insincerity because I possessed property in the Church of England. You called upon the Dissenters of Southwark to shrink with horror from my opinions. You attempted to excite religious animosity and rancour against me. Like an inquisitor of old, you presumed to question me on my religious belief and to summon me before the tribunal of your private judgment. I am glad to meet you here to-day face to face, to answer you, to scoff at your pretensions, and to bid you defiance. I tell you in the name of religious liberty and equality that no man has a right to interfere with the religious opinions of another man. . . . I tell you that in your conduct towards me you have been untrue to the great principle of religious liberty, you have been without that charity which is the essence of religious liberty. You have denounced me as the editor of the works of Hobbes of Malmesbury. Electors, I am proud of that fact. I will rest upon it a claim to your support, in opposition to the claim of Mr. Miall. He is the editor of *The Nonconformist*. I am the editor of *Hobbes*. To compare the two works together would be like comparing the vastest mountain upon the earth's surface with the smallest mole-hill. The works of Hobbes will last more centuries than *The Nonconformist* will days. The writings of Hobbes will last as long as the Anglo-Saxon race and language. They will be read age after age by the studious among

the millions of our race who will people the two Americas and the islands of the Southern Ocean, and who will wonder at that ignorant and bigoted herd who dared to assail so great a master of thought and language. As one of that herd it is your only chance, Mr. Miall, of escaping oblivion. . . . You have denounced me as the editor of an infidel work. I have challenged you, and again challenge you to make good your assertions. I have called upon you to point out one infidel passage, one single sentence derogatory to Christianity in the works of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury. Have you or have you not read those works? If you have not read them, what right have you to say that they are infidel productions? If you have read them, then point out one infidel passage in them, one single sentence hostile to Christianity. I defy you to it. You have indirectly acknowledged that no such passage can be found in these works. Would it not have been manly and courageous to have acknowledged your error, to have said you have never read those works, and that you had been misled with regard to them? Instead of doing this you have had recourse to subterfuge.

First you have talked about Gibbon. Now tell me, acute logician, able reasoner, what has Gibbon to do with Hobbes, or Hobbes with Gibbon? Two minds more dissimilar can hardly be found than the philosopher of Malmesbury and the historian of the Roman Empire. Would you, the lover of knowledge, not only destroy the works of our greatest dialectician, but the writings, likewise, of our greatest historian? Would you consign to the same flames *The Leviathan* and *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*?

Secondly, you have insinuated that some of Hobbes's

opinions lead to infidelity. I ask, is there a single work renowned in science, in literature, or in art, against which a similar charge has not been brought by some narrow-minded bigot? It is a well-known historical fact that every great discovery in astronomy, in natural history, in chemistry, or in any of the physical sciences—that everything which has made us better acquainted with the heavens, with the earth, and with human nature—that every acquisition of knowledge which has tended to elevate humanity—every attempt at free inquiry, every effort to shake off the trammels of authority, has been successively attacked by the ignorant and narrow-minded, as leading to infidelity. Under this malignant and accursed plea some of the greatest spirits of the human race have been persecuted and slain. Socrates was put to death as an infidel. He who first said there were antipodes was burnt. The followers of Copernicus were persecuted as disbelievers, and the great Galileo, on bended knees, was compelled to assert that the earth was immovable. Bacon and Descartes were taxed with irreligion; the doctrines of Locke were said to lead to materialism; Newton was accused of dethroning the Deity by the discovery of the law of gravitation; a similar charge was made against Franklin for explaining the nature of the thunderbolt; Priestley's library was burnt and his person endangered on account of his religious opinions; and in our own days Buckland, Sedgwick, and the other geologists are accused of overturning revelation by their discoveries with regard to the past history of the earth. In short, in all ages, and amongst all nations, infidelity has ever been the war-cry which the base, the ignorant, the intolerant, and the canting tribe have raised against the great, the noble, and the generous spirits of

the human race. That cry you, Mr. Miall, have attempted to raise against the works which I have edited. I now again solemnly call on you, before the electors of Southwark whom you wish to represent in Parliament, to make good your assertions. If you shrink from the attempt, or fail as fail you will, then I accuse you before your fellow-citizens of having brought this charge against me for base electioneering purposes. I brand you as a calumniator, and appeal to the poll of to-morrow.

“The poll of to-morrow” was a practical reply of no uncertain sound to Mr. Miall’s attacks: the numbers were—

Sir W. Molesworth	1943
Jeremiah Pilcher, Esq.	1182
Edward Miall, Esq.	352

The fight in the election of 1845 between Molesworth and Miall is in many respects a prototype of the fight fought out on the platform at Oxford fifteen years later between Huxley and Bishop Wilberforce. It was a fight that is continually going on all through the world’s history between those who fearlessly follow the light of increasing knowledge and those who believe that religion is inseparably bound up with ignorance and with obstinate resistance to the gradually gained knowledge of the laws which govern the physical universe. In 1862 the fight fought at Oxford two years earlier was fought again, but with less bitterness, at Cambridge, when Huxley at the

meeting of the British Association defended the Darwinian hypothesis in the origin of species. Coming away from that meeting, one of the leading men in Cambridge said to his companion, with passionate emotion, "If this doctrine of evolution be substantiated, then is Christ risen in vain, and is become nothing more than an amiable enthusiast." According to its most earnest adherents religion is killed a thousand times; and yet it does not die. Is it not time that the Churches faced the light boldly and recognised that the reverent searching for truth in the physical universe can never be antagonistic to anything but superstition? The essence of real religion is untouched by it, and is, we may hope, as full of vital energy in the twentieth century as it was in the thirteenth.

Sir William Molesworth's attitude towards all questions bearing on religious liberty was always as sincere, outspoken and manly as it was in the speech just quoted; in other speeches bearing on the same subject we may miss the fire which animated his attack upon Mr. Miall in 1845, but we find a quality of more durable value—the sense of the imperial importance to such a country as England, with vast possessions in every quarter of the globe, of the principles of religious liberty. A nation with millions of subjects belonging not to one Church, but almost to every great religion in the world,—Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish,

Mohammedan, Hindoo, Parsee, Buddhist, — is bound to be a nation which maintains the principles of religious liberty. The sense of the imperial necessity for religious liberty made Sir William Molesworth a consistent supporter of the abolition of university tests, of the emancipation of the Jews, and of measures like the grant to Maynooth. Though himself what Huxley called “a Protestant and something more,” he was always ready as a landowner to give or let on easy terms plots of land for the building of churches and chapels representing all religious denominations. His recognition of the imperial importance of religious liberty is well set forth in the speech he made in 1847 in support of the candidature of Baron Lionel Rothschild for the representation of the City of London in Parliament. Jews were excluded from municipal offices down to 1844 by the wording of the oath, which included the expression, “on the true faith of a Christian.” They continued to be excluded from sitting in Parliament down to 1857. The tests and Corporation Act, which excluded all but Churchmen from holding municipal office by rendering the taking of the sacrament obligatory, had been repealed in 1828, before Molesworth was in Parliament. But he was pre-eminently not one of those reformers who confine their enthusiasm to chanting psalms of triumph over past victories,

but give no assistance to the assault on abuses which are still formidable. In 1847 the friends of religious liberty determined to fight the question of the exclusion of Jews from Parliament by bringing forward Jewish candidates for important constituencies, and Baron Lionel Rothschild¹ came forward for the City of London, well knowing that even if elected he would not be able to take his seat; and it was this candidature that Molesworth supported in the following words:—

With regard to Baron Rothschild I must make an observation. In his election a great principle is practically involved, important to the whole of the human race, the principle of religious liberty and equality among men. If you, the electors of this great city, the commercial metropolis of the universe, who number among your citizens more wealthy, careful, energetic, and reflecting men than any other community on the face of the earth, if you who transact one-half of the business operations of the globe, famed for your prudence and skill, if you select as one of the representatives of your vast interests a gentleman professing the ancient and venerable creed of the Jews, you will thereby protest emphatically against all bigotry and intolerance. You will proclaim in the most impressive manner, to all nations of the earth, civilised and uncivilised, your opinion in favour of religious liberty

¹ The current view in fashionable Whig society about Rothschild's candidature and Lord John Russell consenting to be his colleague is probably represented by Greville, who heartily condemns both. Lord John's conduct he calls "very unwise," and Rothschild's candidature he says is "a great piece of impertinence, when he knows he can't take his seat."—*Greville Memoirs*, chap. xxiv. 13th July 1847.

and equality. You will do an act which will win for you honour, gratitude and renown from all liberal and enlightened men. I cannot understand religious bigotry in the present age. I can understand the fierce intolerance of our rude forefathers, to whose uninformed minds the idea of a religion different from their own was inconceivable. But I cannot understand those feelings among us, who are the sovereigns of a hundred millions of human beings whose religions are different from our own—among us, who are brought by commerce in daily and friendly intercourse not only with the Jews of Palestine and the Mohammedans of Asia Minor, but with the Hindoos of India and the innumerable creeds of Eastern Asia, and who find among them equally upright, honourable and excellent men.

By returning Baron Rothschild you will protest against any distinction being drawn between your fellow-citizens on the score of religion. As electors of the most important constituency in the empire, you will set an example to other constituencies ; you will tell them that in selecting their representatives they ought to choose the best and fittest men without reference to sect or creed. And who can deny that a Rothschild is a fitting representative of the bankers and merchant princes of England? I say this, not in homage to his wealth, but as an advocate of a great principle which is involved in this election.

Sir William Molesworth was unfailingly consistent and courageous in defending the principle of religious equality ; and he gave another notable instance of this in the House of Commons a month or two before the General Election of 1847.

The first public grant for education had been made in 1833 by the first reformed Parliament. The annual sum remained for many years only a miserable £30,000 divided between the National and British School Associations to be used by them in erecting school buildings. In 1847, Lord John Russell being Prime Minister, it was decided to take a step in advance and to vote the sum of £100,000 for educational purposes. The proposal was hailed with satisfaction by all the friends of national education in the House of Commons, including Sir W. Molesworth. It, however, became a matter of public knowledge in the course of a long debate, twice adjourned, that it was proposed to exclude Roman Catholics from sharing in the advantages of the grant. Every one will regret that the honoured name of Lord Ashley, afterwards Lord Shaftesbury, was associated with this piece of intolerance. He made himself the medium of communication between the Wesleyan Methodists and Lord John Russell, and intimated on their behalf that if Roman Catholics had any share in the grant, the Wesleyans would decline to participate in it. Lord John Russell gave way; but his Government had not the courage of their intolerance; they did not dare to exclude Catholics as such; but they proposed to restrict the grant to such schools as used the whole of the authorised version of the Bible in their classes, well knowing

that this would exclude the Catholics. Sir William Molesworth exposed the meanness of the proposed transaction and fought the question through to a successful issue in the House of Commons. On 22nd April he made a powerful speech in opposition to the exclusion of Catholics from the grant, and gave notice of a resolution. Lord John Russell showed his discomfiture, but did not give way. On 26th April Sir William moved his resolution and expressed his conviction that the proposal of the Government was a grievous injustice and insult to the Roman Catholics, and that they had been sacrificed to please the Wesleyans.

It is acknowledged [he said] on all hands that ignorance is the parent of vice and crime and that education is the remedy. But does vice, does crime cease to be noxious to the State when it is the vice and crime of Roman Catholics?

Lord John wanted to postpone the matter and to promise to make up the injustice to the Roman Catholics at some future time. Sir William retorted, "The time to do justice is now," and appealed to the House of Commons to quit themselves like men, to lead and not to follow or be dragged at the heels of a popular prejudice in the hope of catching a popular vote. The Government eventually gave way and made a distinct promise, on the strength of which Sir William withdrew his motion, that the minute should be

framed so as to enable the Roman Catholic schools to participate in the grant.¹ Carlyle's remark, "I liked the frank manners of the young man," comes to mind ; but it is easy to see that these frank manners, when used to show up a discreditable trick, did not make their owner a *persona grata* with the Government. "The time to do justice is now" is Molesworth all over and might serve as the motto for his shield. No man ever had less affinity with Roman Catholicism than he, but no man was more instant in assault upon any attempt to put Roman Catholics under disabilities and injustice.

¹ See Hansard, 22nd and 26th April 1847, and also Amherst's *History of Catholic Emancipation*, vol. i. p. 9.

CHAPTER XIV

AGAIN IN PARLIAMENT—WORK ON COLONIAL REFORM

AT the dinner given to celebrate his first return for Southwark in 1845, Sir William Molesworth showed that he appreciated the immense change which the conversion of Peel and his followers to Free Trade would produce in the Conservative party. They had been returned in 1841 as Protectionists. "Since that period, reason, experience, and Sir Robert Peel have worked a great and beneficial change in the opinions of a large portion of the Conservative party . . . they have renounced the doctrine of Protection and are gradually becoming Free Traders." The remnant who still clung to Protection were composed, said Sir William, of the "stupidly honest" interspersed with a few "needy and disappointed adventurers"; these were now "loud in their lamentations and ridiculous in their complaints of being deceived,

deserted, and forlorn. . . .” “As a party opposed to Free Trade, the Conservatives are disunited, broken in pieces, and politically defunct.” Sir William invited his hearers to consider in what direction the increased volume of the stream of Liberalism should be directed, and pointed, first of all, to the alarming condition of Ireland owing to the failure of the potato crops; from this to the importance of emigration was but a short step which brought him back to the subject to which he had given the best of his strength when he had been formerly in Parliament—the value and importance to Great Britain of her Colonies and the necessity of granting to them responsible government. It is true that in this speech he, for the first time, pays tribute, as it were, to the then triumphant Manchester School, and says he does not value colonies as a means of extending the British Empire, but for the influence they will have in developing commerce and increasing wealth; but having thus paid his toll he goes back to his old position and sings a triumphant chant for England over the seas. There is more of Mr. Rudyard Kipling than of Cobden in the following :—

We have planted colonies in every portion of the globe; men of our race are rapidly spreading themselves over the vast northern continent of America, are menacing the Spanish colonies of Central America, and already

grasp in their imagination the provinces of the south. During the last half-century the previously unknown lands of the southern hemisphere have been invaded by Englishmen ; flourishing communities are springing up in Australasia ; emigrants are settled on the shores of New Zealand, and at no remote period an Anglo-Saxon people will rule as sovereigns throughout the islands of the Southern Sea.

Then he urges that though infant colonies require care and protection from the mother country, yet free representative institutions should be granted to them at the earliest possible moment, and he adds :

Gentlemen, England is indebted for the position she now holds amongst the nations of the earth to her free institutions ; to her ships, colonies, and commerce ; and by these means, and with unfettered trade, she will long be able to maintain that position.

This speech was an indication that his course in Parliament after 1845 would be animated by the same principles which he had maintained there from 1832 to 1841, and that his chief energies would be directed to Colonial subjects. To represent, as some have done, that his character changed, or that his ambitions were directed to less worthy ends after his return to public life in 1845, is not corroborated either by speech or action. His character mellowed with advancing years and wider experience, but it was singularly

consistent from the beginning to the end of his life. When he re-entered Parliament, he pursued the same objects for which he had always worked—the reform of representation, the ballot, the spread of national education and religious equality, the abolition of transportation, and, above all, the reform of the relations between Great Britain and her Colonies, and the granting to the Colonies, as soon as they were fit for it, of representative institutions, and a complete control over all their own local affairs. He saw at once that it was necessary in drafting Colonial constitutions to draw a distinction between Imperial and local affairs. This distinction, which Mr. Gladstone declared to be “beyond the wit of man,” when the relation of Ireland to the rest of the United Kingdom was under discussion, presented no insuperable difficulty as regards the Colonies. The method advocated by Molesworth was that the Imperial authority should strictly define and enumerate, after inquiry by a Royal Commission, the subjects which should properly be under Imperial control, and that everything else relating to the Colonies should be regulated by the Colonial Legislatures. Over and over again, as the schemes drafted by the Colonial Office for conferring constitutional government on the various Colonies were brought before the House of Commons, Molesworth

contended with unanswerable logic, and with a powerful marshalling of the more important facts of the situation, that the true policy for the mother country to pursue was to make the Colonial Legislatures really representative in the fullest sense of the term. The plan then favoured by the Colonial Office, and embodied in the Government Bills of 1850, was to allow to each colony, therein dealt with, a single Chamber only, and to provide that the Crown should nominate one-third of its members. Against this scheme, and in favour of giving each colony two Chambers, both representative, but the one reflecting more fully than the other the Conservative elements of society, Sir William Molesworth constantly and energetically devoted indefatigable and eventually successful labour. He was entirely opposed to a nominated element in a so-called representative Chamber, and pointed out what it would be if the Government of the day were able to nominate 220 members of the House of Commons. He said very justly that it would be worse than creating 110 Gattons and Old Sarums.

It was more through him than through any other man that the House of Commons and the country were educated to adopt as the rule of the Colonial policy of Great Britain that all questions which affect exclusively the local interests of a colony possessing representative institutions should

be dealt with by its local legislature. If this rule were frankly accepted, we should have, as he constantly urged, the elements of a contented and loyal Colonial empire. The old plan of irresponsible government by the Colonial Office was really nothing more than tyranny, tempered by insurrection and threats of insurrection. With remarkable sagacity he discerned, notwithstanding the blunders that had strained them almost to breaking-point, how strong were the bonds which united the Colonies to the mother country. In a speech in the House of Commons in May 1850, on the Bill to confer self-government on South Australia and Van Diemen's Land, he draws a sketch of what our Colonies ought to be, and would become if they were not misgoverned into permanent alienation, "a system of States clustered round the central hereditary monarchy of England." Again in April 1851 on a motion for the reduction of Colonial Expenditure he said that if the Colonies were governed as they ought to be, he was certain "they would gladly and willingly come to the aid of the mother country in any just and necessary war." He never underestimated the strength of the ties of a common descent, a common language, and common political ideals and objects. His constant argument was: Sweep away the uncontrolled power of the Colonial Office "government by the misinformed with re-

sponsibility to the ignorant ” : substitute for it complete self-government in all local affairs, and the colonies “ will be bound to Great Britain by the strong ties of race, language, interest and affection.”

I am informed by Lord Thring that in 1850, when the Government Colonial Bills came on, Sir William Molesworth sought his assistance as a lawyer in drafting amendments to the Government measures. Lord (then Mr. Henry) Thring had made a special study of the constitution of the United States, with its elaborate differentiation between State rights and Federal rights. The statesman and the lawyer, between them, framed a complete scheme for the government of the Colonies, based on the American model. It was submitted, unsuccessfully, by Sir William to the House of Commons, in the form of amendments to the Government Bills : it was also printed and circulated as an independent measure. Sir William's speeches in moving his amendments made a very great impression on the House of Commons ; and it is noteworthy that although he carried none of them, subsequent changes in Colonial constitutions have been almost uniformly on the lines advocated by him. One change which he advocated has not yet been brought about, but it is approaching the region of practical politics, viz. the representation of the Colonies in the Imperial Parliament. Lord Thring says that

Sir William, then many years in Parliament, and on the eve of becoming a Cabinet Minister, came to him, a young and briefless barrister, and virtually made himself a pupil. He came to the chamber in Lincoln's Inn daily for weeks, and gave the most earnest and unremitting labour to make himself master of the legal aspects of the problem he desired to solve.

The principles of Colonial self-government are almost universally accepted now; but in the forties and early fifties they needed no small power of heart and intellect for their clear and unflinching enunciation. Molesworth's invaluable services in creating the present Colonial policy of Great Britain and placing it upon a permanent foundation have been acknowledged by the most distinguished of his contemporaries. Mr. Bright, writing to his friend Cobden soon after Molesworth's death, pointed to the great revolution in opinion on Colonial questions which he had brought about.

During the comparatively short period since we entered public life [Mr. Bright wrote in April 1857], see what has been done. . . . The statesmen of the day now agree to repudiate as folly what, twenty years ago, they accepted as wisdom. Look at our Colonial policy. Through the labours of Molesworth, Roebuck, and Hume, more recently supported by us and by Gladstone, every article in the creed which directed

our Colonial policy has been abandoned, and now men actually abhor the notion of undertaking the government of the Colonies ; on the contrary, they give to every Colony which asks for it, a constitution as democratic as that which exists in the United States.¹

Mr. Gladstone also has left a record of what, in his opinion, the Colonial policy of this country owed to Sir William Molesworth. Speaking at Chester in November 1855 about a month after Molesworth's death, he frankly admitted what he himself had learnt from Sir William in matters relating to Colonial government, and stated that he had been a great benefactor of his country by maintaining the true principles of Colonial government at a time when the truth on this subject was exceedingly unpopular. Full of resolution and determination and singularly free from party spirit, Mr. Gladstone declared his conviction that Sir William Molesworth would long be held in honour for his mastery of the facts and principles relating to the Colonial Empire and for his courage and perseverance in insisting upon them.

The mistake made by Cobden, Bright, and the rest of the Manchester School was in believing that the freedom of the Colonies would lead to their complete separation from the mother country. They underestimated the forces of cohesion which bind the Empire together. The most distinguished

¹ Morley, *Life of Cobden*, vol. ii. pp. 194, 195.

survivors of this school are Mr. Goldwin Smith and Mr. John Morley. The former expected and wished that Canada should cut herself adrift from England and become a part of the United States ; the latter, reviewing Seeley's *Expansion of England*, asked the question—

What is the common bond that is to bring the Colonies into a Federal Union? . . . Is it possible to suppose that the Canadian lumberman and the Australian sheep-farmer will cheerfully become contributors to a Greater Britain fund? . . . Is there any reason to suppose that South Africa would contribute towards the maintenance of cruisers? No, we may depend upon it that it would be a *mandat impératif* on every federal delegate not to vote a penny for any war, or preparation for war, that might arise from the direct or indirect interests of any colony but his own.

What a contrast these words afford to the more generous and more statesmanlike forecast of the future made in the speeches of Sir William Molesworth.

Sir William was in no sense identified with the Manchester School, though he often spoke and voted with its representatives. In his speeches he frequently referred to those to whom he looked as master minds. They were not Bright or Cobden ; still less Roebuck or Hume ; but Charles Buller, Wakefield, and Lord Durham. All of these men were identified with the policy of uniting the

Colonies with the Empire by good government and free institutions.

Charles Buller died in 1848 ; cut off, as all his friends felt, from a future full of promise, but with a record too of work done, and principles maintained that have left a lasting mark on the history of his country. It is curious how many of the men identified with the reform of the Colonial policy of Great Britain were cut off in what ought to have been the prime of life. Charles Buller died at the age of forty-two ; Lord Durham at forty-eight ; his successor in Canada, Lord Sydenham, at forty-two ; and Sir William Molesworth at forty-five.

The death of Buller was a severe loss, both personally and politically, to Sir William Molesworth. In an important speech in the House of Commons, on 25th June 1849, moving for a Royal Commission to inquire into the administration of the Colonies, Sir William referred to the friend whom he had lost. He quoted Charles Buller's well-known attack upon the then existing Colonial Office system :—

It has all the faults of an essentially arbitrary government, in the hands of persons who have little personal interest in the welfare of those over whom they rule ; who reside at a distance from them ; who never have ocular experience of their condition ; who are obliged to trust to second-hand and one-sided information, and

who are exposed to the operation of all those sinister influences which prevail wherever publicity and freedom are not established. . . . Such power is exercised in the faulty manner in which arbitrary, secret, and irresponsible power must be exercised over distant communities. It is exercised with great ignorance of the real condition and feelings of the people subjected to it ; it is exercised with that presumption, and at the same time, in that spirit of mere routine, which are the inherent vices of bureaucratic rule ; it is exercised in a mischievous subordination to intrigues and cliques at home, and intrigues and cliques in the Colonies. And its results are a system of constant procrastination and vacillation, which occasion heart-breaking injustice to individuals, and continual disorder in the communities subjected to it. These are the results of the present system of Colonial government, and must be the results of every system which subjects the internal affairs of a people to the will of a distant authority not responsible to anybody.

These [continued Sir William in his speech] were the words of my late friend, Mr. Charles Buller. They expressed his deliberate and unchanged convictions, and are deserving of the utmost respect : for no one had more carefully or more profoundly studied Colonial questions, no one had brought greater talents to bear on those questions, no one was more anxious for the well-being of the Colonies, no one was better qualified as a statesman to govern the Colonies ; and those who knew him well, and loved him, did fondly hope that the time would come when he would be placed in a position to be a benefactor to the Colonies, and to make a thorough reform of the Colonial system of the British Empire. But, alas ! Providence has willed it otherwise.

The work which Molesworth and Buller had pursued together was now to fall, as far as the House of Commons was concerned, on Molesworth alone. He never let it drop until death put an end to his labours. In the speech just quoted, he shows, how even in those Colonies (Canada after 1838 excepted) which had nominally representative government, the representation was a sham, because, by the existence of a legislative assembly composed of Colonial Office nominees, the non-representative council could reject or disallow every measure passed by the representative assembly. The result was an intensity of party hatred and rancour, culminating from time to time in a deadlock, caused by the refusal of the representative assembly to pass the votes in supply; then would follow rebellion, or threats of rebellion, and military force was frequently required for the maintenance of order. In the end, as the result of all this disaster and muddle, the patient and long-suffering British taxpayer had to pay the bill. The rhyme had not then been invented; if it had, Sir William Molesworth must have quoted it—it is too apposite to have been neglected—

Who pays the piper?
I, said John Bull,
Whoever plays the fool,
I pay the piper.

Sir William Molesworth pointed out the absolute hopelessness of the old Colonial Office system of government. It was the system, rather than the persons who attempted to carry it out, which he attacked.

The fault is in the system. The wonder to me is, not that the system works ill—not that it produces discontent and complaint—but that it works no worse than it does. Consider, sir, for one moment, the nature of its working machinery. To govern our forty-three colonies, scattered over the face of the globe, inhabited by men differing in race, language and religion, with various institutions, strange laws, and unknown customs—the staff of the Colonial Office consists only of five superior and twenty-three inferior functionaries—making in all twenty-eight persons for the government of forty-three colonies.

And he continues, drawing a humorous picture of the jack-of-all-trades, the Secretary of State, who is supposed to be equally at home in the management of the finance, religions and economics of his forty-three dominions, to show that the average duration of time during which a Secretary of State remains at the Colonial Office is from eighteen months to two years, and asks if there is any reason to be astonished that the brain of the unfortunate man is in a perpetual whirl or wild dream, and that blundering, vacillation and procrastination characterised the administration of the Colonial Office.

Molesworth was unsuccessful in carrying his motion (House of Commons, 25th June 1849) for the appointment of a Royal Commission¹ to inquire into the administration of the Colonies. But his speech produced a very considerable impression upon the House, and is a mine of carefully verified information used to illustrate and enforce his arguments. Every speech he made raised his position in the House as an authority on Colonial subjects.

The subject of Transportation comes up again and again in these House of Commons speeches between 1846 and 1851. Its maintenance was an illustration of the want of wisdom and good faith displayed by the Colonial Office system of government. The grievance of the Colonies still used as convict stations was very great. Colonial Office ideas of colonisation consisted almost exclusively in shovelling out of England its convicts and paupers; and to the communities formed under these overwhelming disadvantages, free representative institutions were for a long period withheld on the ground that they were too degraded for self-government. Convict emigration checked the development of true colonisation. Respectable families declined to transfer themselves to localities where the general level of

¹ Among the names suggested by Molesworth as members of this Commission were those of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. John Stuart Mill.

morality was so incredibly low as it had become in the transportation colonies. Transportation and the absence of free representative institutions acted upon each other in a vicious circle, and they both united to divert the stream of the best kind of emigrants from the British colonies. An Englishman, as Sir William pointed out, emigrating to the United States, carried with him the Englishman's laws, rights and liberties ; but if he emigrated to the colonies of his own country, he lost the most precious of his liberties—the right of self-government—and might be forced, in consequence of the transportation system, into association with the lowest and most degraded of the refuse of the old country. The discontent, unrest and threats of rebellion in the Colonies were so perpetual, that large classes of intelligent politicians at home were beginning to ask, Is it worth while to retain the connection? and to answer the question in the negative. This was a counsel of despair against which Sir William Molesworth energetically protested. He said, referring particularly to the granting of self-government, as the solution of the transportation question and other Colonial problems :—

I am convinced that upon the practical settlement of these questions the maintenance of our Colonial Empire mainly depends. I believe that the stability of that empire is in imminent danger from their non-settlement ;

first, in consequence of the Colonial discontent engendered thereby ; secondly, in consequence of the opinion, which I am sorry to say is thence gaining ground in this country, that these Colonial questions are insoluble ; therefore that good Colonial government is impossible ; therefore that the Colonies are nuisances and burdens : and therefore the fewer they are in number, and the sooner they are got rid of, the better. I lament the growth of these opinions : but I am satisfied they will spread and acquire strength in proportion as the settlement of the questions to which I have referred is delayed.¹

As early as 1842, during the Colonial Secretaryship of Lord Stanley, a beginning had been made in granting representative institutions in the Australian colonies, by an Act which created for New South Wales a single legislative chamber, two-thirds elected and one-third nominated by the Crown. The Act of 1850, introduced by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons for the better government of the Australian colonies, was of a similar character, and speaking generally, the passing of this Act dates the beginning of the era of self-government in Australia. Earl Grey was the real author of the Bill ; it gave rise to a great Parliamentary fight, and was, as has been already seen, severely criticised by Sir William Molesworth,

¹ Speech in House of Commons, April 1850, moving an amendment in Committee on the Bill for granting self-government to Van Diemen's Land and South Australia.

on the ground that it did not go far enough in a democratic direction. He gave his voice and influence for abandoning the principle of nomination and giving to each colony two chambers, both elective. But the Government scheme, with many defects, had this great merit : it afforded machinery for the modification of the Colonial constitutions according to the wishes of each colony. The original scheme was therefore promptly modified in nearly all the Colonies, and generally in the direction advocated by Sir William. The modified constitution of most of the Colonies dates from 1855 ; the Act of 1850 proving not much more than a basis for discussion. The present year (1901) will probably see further developments in the direction of making the Legislative Councils of the Australian colonies elective. The views on Colonial policy set forth by Sir William Molesworth have recently been justified by the logic of great events—the passing of the Act for the federation of the Australian colonies, and the outburst of loyal affection for the Empire which brought the sons of Great Britain from every colony, shoulder to shoulder on the battlefields of South Africa.

CHAPTER XV

THE LAST OF TRANSPORTATION

IN 1849 Lord John Russell, as Prime Minister, thought fit to accuse Molesworth, most unjustly, of a wish to get rid of the Colonial Empire of Great Britain. Molesworth had no difficulty in repudiating the charge.

The noble lord [he said] had described the Colonial Empire as a glorious inheritance which we had received from our ancestors, and declared that he was determined at all risks to maintain it for ever intact. Now, I ask him how do we treat that precious inheritance? By transportation we stock it with convicts; we convert it into the moral dung-heap of Great Britain;¹ and we tell our colonists that thieves and felons are fit to be their

¹ This vehemence of expression is pardonable when it is recalled that a Colonial Secretary had complacently admitted that there was a point at which a colony should not be called upon to receive any addition to its convict population. Lord Hobart had said, "If you continually send thieves to one place, it must in time be supersaturated. Sydney now, I think, is completely saturated. We must let it rest and purify for a few years, till it begins again to be in a condition to receive" (see Egerton's *British Colonial Policy*, p. 264).

associates. Is this the mode and manner to inspire the inhabitants of our colonies with those feelings of affection and esteem for the mother country, without which our Colonial Empire must speedily crumble in the dust, notwithstanding our numerous garrisons? . . . If the noble lord be sincere and earnest, as I am, in the wish to maintain that empire intact, and hand it down great and prosperous to posterity, he will cordially unite with me in the effort to put an end to convict emigration. I maintain that we have no moral right to relieve ourselves of our criminals at the expense of the Colonies, and that the desire to make a scapegoat of the Colonies, by whomsoever entertained . . . is a mean and selfish feeling, of which, as citizens of this great Empire, we ought to be ashamed.

In 1849-50 an event occurred which threw a very singular light on the transportation system. A circular had been issued from the Colonial Office in 1848, stating that certain specified colonies, including the Cape of Good Hope, and the Australian colonies, with the exception of Van Diemen's Land, should not be forced to receive convicts without the consent of their respective inhabitants. Notwithstanding this circular, a shipload of convicts was despatched in 1849 on board the *Neptune* to the Cape. These convicts had been made into ticket-of-leave men; and it was the view of the Colonial Office that calling them by another name would relieve the Imperial Government of the necessity of observing the promise

made by the circular of the previous year. But “a rose by any other name would smell as sweet,” and a convict did not become a more welcome visitor by being called a ticket-of-leave man. Immediately on hearing of the anticipated embarkation of this ship, the white inhabitants of Cape Colony, men and women, entered an energetic protest against it. They felt that a large number of European convicts let loose, as they eventually would be, among the native races of Cape Colony, would produce a state of things perfectly intolerable to the self-respecting European inhabitants. According to the ancient tradition of the Colonial Office, protest and petition were unheeded, and the ship *Neptune* was despatched with convicts on board, and in due course she anchored in Simon’s Bay. The inhabitants of Cape Town and the neighbourhood had, however, in anticipation of her arrival, bound themselves together neither to allow the convicts to land, nor to supply the *Neptune* with food or provisions of any sort as long as she remained in Simon’s Bay. For five months the contest lasted; the *Neptune* obtained scanty supplies of food from ships of war, but none from the inhabitants of Cape Colony. The *Neptune* was, in fact, severely boycotted, and in the end the Colonists won the victory, and the convict ship received orders from home to proceed to Van Diemen’s Land. Such an event was a useful

weapon in the hands of a skilful opponent of transportation, and Sir William Molesworth did not fail to appreciate its value.

He had been working and arguing against transportation ever since the House of Commons Committee of 1838, of which he had been chairman ; and he now felt that the blunders of the Colonial Office had delivered his enemy into his hands. The Cape colonists had successfully defended themselves against the landing of convicts, and Sir William brought forward in the House of Commons, on 20th May 1851, an overwhelming case for the complete and immediate abandonment of transportation to Van Diemen's Land. His case was as follows :—

On 20th July 1847, Sir William Denison, then Governor of Van Diemen's Land, had announced in the Legislative Council of the Colony, in the name of the Queen and of the Home Government, that the wishes of the colonists would be complied with and transportation abolished. Notwithstanding the promise thus formally and officially made, no steps towards its fulfilment had then, four years later, been made. Sir William presented petitions signed by every section of the community claiming the fulfilment of the Imperial promise ; the free labourers of the colony threatened to leave if transportation were continued, and to allow the island to become one huge den of

thieves and felons. A separate petition was addressed direct to the Queen, as the mother of many children, by fathers and mothers in the colony, praying Her Majesty to save their children from the horrid corruption and pollution to which they were exposed by being surrounded by convicts. Sir William referred to the fact that Lord John Russell had been a member of the House of Commons Committee on Transportation in 1838, and was therefore well aware of the frightful abominations following the transportation system. He thanked Lord John Russell for turning his knowledge to good account by having, in May 1840, revoked the Order in Council which made New South Wales a penal colony. Unfortunately, however, Lord John Russell's tenure of the Colonial Office was very short. He was succeeded in 1841 by Lord Stanley (afterwards the 14th Earl of Derby—the Rupert of Debate). “Lord Stanley utterly disregarded every one of the recommendations of the Transportation Committee with regard to Van Diemen's Land.” Convicts were poured into the unfortunate colony during the five years during which Lord Stanley was Colonial Secretary, at an average rate of 4200 a year. This was a colony the whole population of which was, in 1837, only 42,800. Nearly all the 21,000 convicts transported by Lord Derby to Van Diemen's Land in the period named were

men. The consequence of this congregation of convicts and the vast disproportion between the sexes were even worse than the Transportation Committee had anticipated. When Mr. Gladstone succeeded Lord Stanley as Colonial Secretary in December 1845, he caused an inquiry to be instituted into the state of the colony. The most appalling discoveries were made. Sir James Stephen, the Permanent Under-Secretary of the Colonial Office, said that the chain-gangs and probation parties were "nothing less than schools of advanced depravity, by which every remaining trace of virtuous habit or sentiment was effaced from the mind of the convict." Mr. Gladstone caused the governor to be recalled and the transportation system to be suspended for two years. Then he left office (on the Maynooth question) July 1846, and was succeeded as Colonial Secretary by Lord Grey, an ardent advocate of transportation. Sir William Denison, the new Governor appointed at the instance of Mr. Gladstone, arrived in the colony at the beginning of 1847. He found the colony unanimous in condemnation of transportation, and at the opening of the Legislative Council on 20th July 1847 he said :—

I take the earliest opportunity of laying before you the decision of Her Majesty's Government that transportation to Van Diemen's Land should not be resumed at the

expiration of the two years for which it has already been decided that it should be discontinued.

Great was the joy of the inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land on receiving this promise. Letters and addresses were sent to Lord Grey thanking him for the decision at which the colonists believed he had arrived. Sir William Denison, in a despatch to the Colonial Office, dated August 1847, informed the Home Government that he had announced the abolition of transportation to Van Diemen's Land. This despatch was received in London on 5th February 1848, and acknowledged on 27th April of the same year; the action of the Governor was neither censured nor disowned. The Imperial authority was therefore pledged up to the hilt to carry out the promise which had been made; but this very same despatch announced the intention of the Home Government to resume transportation to Van Diemen's Land by making it a depôt for the reception of ticket-of-leave men. The fine distinction made by Lord Grey between ticket-of-leave men and convicts did not commend itself more in Van Diemen's Land than it had done at the Cape. The utmost indignation was felt throughout the colony. Vigorous protests were made, and the charge of breach of faith was vehemently brought forward. A resolution condemning the action of the Home Government was

unanimously passed by the Legislative Council. This was followed by a protest addressed to Sir W. Denison, and signed by 117 magistrates of the colony, and another signed by ministers of religion. Public meetings assembled which expressed "astonishment, indignation and regret" at the breach of faith to which the colony had been subjected. An Anti-Transportation League was formed, every member of which bound himself not to employ any male convict arriving after 1st January 1849. Personal petitions to Her Majesty were agreed upon, and immediately received a large number of signatures from heads of families, male and female. In the midst of the excitement caused by this agitation against the Home Government, oil was poured on the flames by the arrival of the convict ship *Neptune* from Simon's Bay in April 1850. Cape Colony had successfully resisted the landing of convicts, but the colonists of Van Diemen's Land were apparently believed to be made of more pliable material, and the refuse of England, denied entrance into Cape Colony, was sent on to the unfortunate island. It was an insult as well as an injury. The Colonial Office circular already referred to increased the exasperation which prevailed. Why, it was asked, when all the other colonies were ceasing to be made convict stations, should Van Diemen's Land receive less favourable treatment? The exception of Van

Diemen's Land was justified by the Colonial Office on the plea that it had always been a penal colony, although almost a year before this circular was issued, viz. in July 1847, the Governor of Van Diemen's Land had promised on behalf of the Imperial Government that transportation to that colony should cease. This plea that Van Diemen's Land should be treated exceptionally on the ground that it always had been a penal colony was resented as most unjust and tyrannical.

The colonists [said Sir William Molesworth in the House of Commons] argued that the only difference between their colony and New South Wales had been occasioned by a breach of faith on the part of the Colonial Office in not fulfilling the promise to abolish transportation; and that if that promise had been fulfilled, transportation could not have been renewed without a violation of the rule laid down by the Colonial Office. The arrival of the *Neptune* showed the colonists how successfully the colony of the Cape had resisted an attempt to violate that rule, and gave them ocular demonstration of two important facts; first, that it was the deliberate intention of the Colonial Office to make their colony a huge cesspool, in which all the criminal filth of the British Empire was to be accumulated; secondly, that it was in the power of the people of a colony by combination, vigour and self-reliance to defeat the intentions of the Colonial Office, and to compel it to keep faith. I am convinced that the arrival of the *Neptune* will hereafter be a memorable epoch in the history of transportation to Van Diemen's Land.

Sir William went on to say that the fact that only the year before the Imperial Parliament had granted representative institutions to Van Diemen's Land only made the recent procedure with regard to forcing convicts upon the island ridiculous and futile.

Sir, before I sit down I will put one question to Her Majesty's Government. Last year you gave representative institutions and self-government to Van Diemen's Land. What did you mean by so doing? How did you mean that the inhabitants of that colony should govern themselves? Did you mean that they should govern themselves in the manner which they think best for their interests, or in the manner which you think best for the interests of this country? Now, on the subject of transportation there is a conflict between the alleged interests of this country and those of Van Diemen's Land. You think that it is for your interest to transport your convicts to Van Diemen's Land, and to cast forth your criminal filth on Van Diemen's Land. The inhabitants of that colony think that it is for their interest not to receive your felons and not to continue to be your cesspool. Which of these two interests ought the representatives of Van Diemen's Land to prefer? Ought they to prefer the interests of their constituents or of your constituents? They will without doubt prefer the interests of their own constituents. They are bound to do so by every recognised principle of representative government. They will do so. I believe not one man will be elected a member of the House of Assembly in Van Diemen's Land who is not pledged to resist trans-

portation by every means in his power. What will you do? Discontinue transportation, or repeal the constitution of Van Diemen's Land? You must do one of these two things. For free institutions and transportations cannot coexist in Van Diemen's Land as long as the feelings of the inhabitants of that colony are such as they are at present.

He then reiterated his long-standing opposition, root and branch, to transportation wherever practised; but the question before the House was not, he observed, of a general character, but was confined to the continuance of transportation in Van Diemen's Land.

If the House resolved upon continuing it, then I say you have committed an act of insanity in giving to the inhabitants of Van Diemen's Land free institutions and arming them with the best weapons to oppose your will. I call upon you to keep faith with them and to extend to them the rule that no convicts shall be transported to them without their consent.

He warns the House that an Australian league was being formed against transportation, and that further persistence in enforcing it would permanently alienate the Colonies from us, and concluded:—

I exhort and warn the House to suffer no delay in this matter if it hold dear our Australian dependencies. For many years I have taken the deepest interest in the affairs of these colonies. I am convinced they are amongst the most valuable of our Colonial possessions, the priceless

jewel in the diadem of our Colonial Empire. I believe that they can easily be retained, with a little common sense and judgment on our part ; that well governed they would cost us nothing, but offer us daily improving markets for our industry, fields for the employment of our labour and capital, and happy homes for our surplus population ; that the Australian Empire is in danger from the continuance of transportation to Van Diemen's Land, and I therefore move that an address be presented to Her Majesty praying for its discontinuance.

As the current opinion of the day measures success, this speech and motion were a failure, for the debate was brought to a premature close by a count out. It was, however, very far from a failure from a wider point of view. It was the last assault of a victorious attack on a wholly vicious penal system. Transportation has been called "the bane without an antidote, the curse without a blessing." This bane, this curse, against which Sir William had continuously fought during every year of his Parliamentary life, were now at length overcome. Within little more than a year from the date of this speech, transportation in Van Diemen's Land had ceased. The date of its abolition was 1st January 1853. The speech from which quotations have been made was the last Sir William ever had occasion to deliver on the subject of transportation. Van Diemen's Land showed its appreciation of its deliverance, and its desire to blot out the remem-

brance of its miserable past, by changing its name. From 1st January 1855 it took the name of Tasmania. Such an unusual step, on the part of an Anglo-Saxon population, as a change of name, marks the intensity of the feeling in the island against the convict system.

Western Australia maintained and approved of the convict system long after it had been discontinued in every other Australian colony. This colony was without representative institutions until 1890, and there were other circumstances which differentiated its position. But gradually Western Australia fell into line with her sister colonies, and the last ship with convicts was despatched there in 1867.

CHAPTER XVI

SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH JOINS LORD ABERDEEN'S GOVERNMENT AS FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS

ON 28th June 1850, in the Don Pacifico debate in the House of Commons, Sir William voted against Lord Palmerston's foreign policy. Mrs. Austin, writing to Guizot on the debate and its results, said :—

Sir William Molesworth spoke and acted excellently. Several men went to ask his advice and what he meant to do. He said: "I shall tell no one. I shall vote as my own conscience directs, but the responsibility of each man's vote must rest with himself."¹

Mrs. Austin's letter must not be taken to mean that Molesworth gave a silent vote ; he spoke on the third night of the debate, and explained the grounds of his opposition to Roebuck's motion in defence of Lord Palmerston. Every one knows the fame of that debate and of Lord Palmerston's

¹ *Three Generations of Englishwomen.*

celebrated speech, with the "*Civis Romanus Sum*" episode, so often quoted. Sir William repudiated the "*Civis Romanus Sum*" theory, and held that the travelling Englishman who ventures into foreign lands and among uncivilised peoples must do so at his own risk, and must not expect to be sheltered by the ægis of Great Britain. In this respect the judgment of posterity has been more in accordance with the views of Palmerston than with those of Molesworth. Who is there that does not feel that it is worth something to be a British subject? that if he is wronged anywhere in the ends of the earth, Great Britain will see him righted? When Great Britain acts up to this character, every Briton repays the debt he owes his country with love and gratitude, and with his life if need be. When she forgets and becomes lazy, and says, "What business is it of mine?" then follow shame and disaster, and eventually there is a long bill to pay in life, money and reputation. A senator of the United States once told the story of the Abyssinian Expedition of 1868, and how to rescue one Englishman, with his secretaries and little band of followers, eight persons in all, 10,000 British soldiers were marched seven hundred miles under a burning sun, across a desert, to the foot of the famous fortress, and the man was delivered from his captivity.

That was a great thing for a great country to do—a country that has an eye that can see all across the ocean,

away up to the mountain heights, and away down to the darksome dungeon, one subject of hers out of her thirty-eight millions of people, and then has an arm strong enough and long enough to stretch across the same ocean, across the same lands, up the same mountain heights, down to the same dungeon, and then lift him out and carry him to his own country and friends! In God's name, who would not die for a country that will do that?

The House of Commons, in 1850, endorsed Palmerston's policy of defending, even at the risk of war, the rights of a Portuguese Jew, who happened to be a British subject. The numbers in the division after a four nights' debate were 310 to 264. Gladstone, Molesworth and many other distinguished men voted in the minority and against Palmerston and the party of which they were members; but a rather curious light is thrown on the vote of these two men just named by a letter, dated 1851, from Mr. Panizzi to Lord Shrewsbury.¹ Lord Shrewsbury had publicly defended the then government of Naples, and Panizzi, writing to controvert his views, said that Gladstone, "as a strong Conservative, Christian and gentleman," had assured him (Panizzi) in accents of deep religious conviction that the government of Naples was the government of Hell on Earth; the details were so horrible and indecent that he could not tell them before an

¹ See Mr. L. Fagan's *Life of Panizzi*.

assembly of gentlemen. "Another man of unimpeachable character, of remarkable talents, of opposite political principles, Sir William Molesworth, fully agrees with Mr. Gladstone, and both say openly they rejoice at the majority of the House of Commons [in the Pacifico debate] that kept Palmerston in office last summer, when they both voted in the minority."

It was very unlike the straightforwardness of Molesworth's ordinary character to vote in the minority, and yet rejoice that it was a minority. Is it possible that he was temporarily under the influence of the Manchester School in 1850, with their very pronounced views on non-interference and peace, and that his speech and vote in the Pacifico debate represented the strength of this influence rather than the natural expression of his unbiassed judgment? This view of his position is rather corroborated by Mrs. Austin's account of his desire not to influence other members to vote with him against the Government. A long letter from Sir William Molesworth to his friend the Hon. Charles Villiers, though not dated, evidently belongs to the early part of 1852, as it refers to the condition of parties as affected by the dismissal of Lord Palmerston consequent on his approval of the *coup d'état* of Louis Napoleon. He says :—

You ask my opinion with regard to Johnnie's *coup d'état*. Senior says that Lord John has long disapproved

of and wished to upset Palmerston, but was afraid of the Radicals ; and that Palmerston's absolute approval of the conduct of Napoleon, being likely to destroy his popularity with them, afforded the long-wished-for opportunity. I blame Palmerston's conduct in this matter for the same reason as I have blamed his general policy (*sic*), namely, for meddling with other people's affairs. . . . I think Palmerston was to blame on general grounds for expressing any opinion with regard to the *coup d'état* ; and also as the representative of a constitutional government and a nation whose first principle of political morality is respect for law and constitution ; he was doubly to blame for going out of his way to express unqualified approbation for an act in the highest degree illegal and unconstitutional. If Palmerston did this without the consent of the Cabinet, or, as some say, in direct opposition to the wishes of his colleagues, I am not surprised that they got rid of him, and am only surprised they were not equally touchy before. I expect well from Lord Granville, and in these critical times I shall feel much less anxiety with our foreign relations being managed by a man of sound sense and judgment and integrity rather than by a veteran diplomatist skilled in intrigue. The only subject of regret is that the Foreign Secretary will not be in the House of Commons.

He goes on to prophesy that Palmerston will ultimately join the Protectionist party : " He wants a following, and they want a leader whom it would not appear ridiculous to themselves to follow." He thinks it probable even that Gladstone might be brought into this curious

combination : “ Last session Gladstone, I thought, sought Protectionist cheers, and he must have been much conciliated to Palmerston by the official dissemination of his Neapolitan tracts.”

So much for the limbo of unfulfilled prophecy, and so little can the keenest observers foretell the immediate future.

When he leaves the realms of prophecy, and comes back to what has happened, Sir William's remarks might have appeared as part of a leading article in yesterday's papers. He dwells on the desirability, in a country like ours, with a party system, of two well-drilled, well-organised political parties in opposition to one another, either of which should be prepared to form a Government and take office. In 1851-52 the Tory party had been smashed and destroyed by the conversion of Peel and his followers to Free Trade ; just as the Liberal party of the present time was shattered by the conversion of Mr. Gladstone and his followers to Home Rule in 1885. The analogy ends there, for Free Trade became an accomplished fact, and in 1852 its political and economic success left little room for doubt ; while the mass of Englishmen and Scotchmen remain as unconvinced as ever that the Irish Separatists have solved the enigma of Irish unrest. The old Tory party was destroyed in 1847, but it carried Free Trade in the process.

The old Liberal party was destroyed in 1885, but accomplished nothing in the process.

The contrast between Palmerston's position in foreign politics and his attitude on domestic reform must have been an extreme exasperation to the Radicals of 1850. He was constantly lecturing foreign sovereigns and peoples on the advantages of constitutional government, and urging British ambassadors to assume the rôle of university extension lecturers in order to spread the knowledge of the advantages of representative institutions in a benighted world ; yet in home politics he was the great obstacle in the way of an extension of the suffrage and domestic reform. He was a Whig of 1832 on the question of Parliamentary reform in Great Britain, and could not be induced to see that the exact degree of progress made twenty years before in the direction of a democratic suffrage was not the ultimate goal beyond which no reasonable person could wish to travel. A Tory at home and a Radical abroad, he was the exact antithesis of the school of Cobden and Bright, who wished England to withdraw altogether from intervention in foreign politics and concentrate herself on questions of domestic reform. Molesworth belonged to neither school ; he had a great sense of the Imperial mission of Great Britain in her relation to her Colonies, but he was also heartily with Cobden and Bright in desiring

to promote the ballot, the extension of the suffrage and the other developments of the democratic movement at home. Indeed it should perhaps be said that on these questions they followed him, rather than he them, as he was earlier in the field of active politics than they had been.

At the General Election of 1852 Sir William was once more returned for the borough of Southwark. In his speech at the opening of the election on 1st June, he said that Free Trade was still the great question of the day, and he characteristically referred his audience to the principles laid down by Adam Smith, Mill and Ricardo, rather than to the popular political leaders of the anti-corn law movement. He warned them not to put too much confidence in the "practical man," reminding them that Lord Melbourne a few years before had declared that a man must be mad who thought it was possible to repeal the corn laws. He again enunciated his belief in the great importance of Colonial self-government, and stated that he believed the views on this subject which he had so long advocated were gaining ground in the House of Commons and among enlightened men of all parties. As his consistency on the subject of peace was afterwards called in question by Bright and Cobden, it is desirable to quote his declaration to his constituents upon it.

Next you may ask me, whether I think any considerable reduction can be made in the military establishments at home, or that they ought to be increased. Now I am neither an alarmist nor a member of the Peace Society. I hate war, but I would rather fight than submit to insult, robbery or oppression. Therefore I do not think that this great and wealthy empire should be left without military and naval forces sufficient to maintain its position amongst the European States. On the other hand, I do not believe that Louis Napoleon will appear one fine morning at the head of his troops in the midst of London.¹ It is not for his interest to go to war, and he won't meddle with us if we don't meddle with him. I have therefore voted against the Militia Bill—first, because I do not believe that there is any necessity for an increase of the military forces of this country; and secondly, if there were any such necessity, it would be better to increase the standing army, for a militia is a force wholly unsuited to the present stage of the world's civilisation. If we want more soldiers, we had better pay for good ones.

In the same speech he advocated an extension of the suffrage and a redistribution of seats, the ballot, the abolition of the property qualification for members of Parliament, stating that the wider the basis on which the Constitution rests the firmer will it be. He also supported national education, defended the income-tax, the grant to Maynooth, and the general principles of religious toleration.

¹ This was said during the excitement caused by a belief in the imminence of a French invasion.

This was just at the time when the assumption by the Roman Catholic Church of religious titles in the United Kingdom had led to a strong “no Popery” agitation, and to the passing of the Ecclesiastical Titles Act. He wound up his speech by a spirited attack on Lord Derby, then Prime Minister, the Lord Derby who had reimposed transportation upon Australia.

The name of Lord Derby [said Sir William] is inscribed upon the banners of certain candidates as the symbol of their political faith. . . . What does it mean? It does not mean the famous Lord Stanley of the House of Commons. He was an eloquent orator, the Rupert of debate; ready to carry the Reform Bill at the expense of revolution; hot, zealous, chivalrous, without a particle of statesmanship; for six years he misgoverned the Colonies; there is scarcely a Colonial grievance of any importance which may not be traced to his mismanagement; he produced a rebellion in Canada—may he not produce another! He sowed the seeds of our costly wars in South Africa; he caused the hideous demoralisation of Van Diemen’s Land, for he was wrong-headed, obstinate, ignorant, rash, reckless and careless of consequences; but on the whole, frank, straightforward and manly. This Lord Stanley is not the Lord Derby who appears on the hustings of the present day. Who is he? A Free Trader in the towns; a Protectionist in the counties; pro-Maynooth in Ireland, anti-Maynooth in England and Scotland; saying one thing one day, retracting it the next, repeating it the third, equivocating about it the fourth. A political jockey, riding a losing horse, hoping

to win by a cross ; a thimble-rigger, gammoning clowns and chaw-bacons with the pea of Protection, which will never be found under any one of his thimbles ; a truckler to the bigotry he means to betray ; the leader of men who have no convictions, whose only rule of political conduct is success, the end and aim of whose existence are the gratification of personal ambition ; men long eager for power, surprised at obtaining it, unscrupulous as to the means of retaining it ; recreant Protectionists ; dishonest Free Traders, hiding insincerity under the mask of intolerance ; too pusillanimous to stick by their colours, and not courageous enough to take up a new position. . . . Lord Derby, in one of his speeches, likened a statesman to a barque, which trims its sails and alters its course with each changing wind and varying breeze. This is not my notion of a statesman. I liken a true statesman and upright politician to a steam vessel which pursues its steady course amidst storms and waves in defiance of adverse gales and opposing tides, and straightforward reaches its destined port.

This passage is a fair example of Sir William Molesworth's election speeches. It certainly does not confirm what recent writers have said of the impression produced by his speaking, as a kind of biltong of blue-books and statistics. The attack on Lord Derby was reproduced as an election poster and appeared on the walls of many constituencies.

The election of 1852 resulted in a small Liberal majority, but Lord Derby's Cabinet held office till 18th December, when they were

defeated on the Budget by a majority of nineteen, and the Queen called upon the Earl of Aberdeen to form a Government. The post of First Commissioner of Works with a seat in the Cabinet was offered to and accepted by Sir William Molesworth. The whole Cabinet consisted of the following:—

The Earl of Aberdeen, First Lord of the Treasury.

Lord Cranworth, Lord Chancellor.

Earl Granville, Lord President of the Council.

The Duke of Argyll, Lord Privy Seal.

Mr. W. E. Gladstone, Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Viscount Palmerston, Home Secretary.

The Duke of Newcastle, Secretary for Colonies and War.¹

Lord John Russell (and later the Earl of Clarendon), Foreign Secretary.

Sir James Graham, First Lord of the Admiralty.

Mr. Sidney Herbert, Secretary at War.

Sir Charles Wood, President of the India Board.

Sir William Molesworth, First Commissioner of Works.

The Marquis of Lansdowne, without office.

Sir William announced his appointment to his family in the following letter:—

87 EATON PLACE,
Dec. 27, 1852.

MY DEAR AUNT—I am sure it will give you pleasure to learn that Her Majesty has been pleased to appoint me

¹ The Duke of Newcastle was the last Minister who held these two offices jointly.

a member of the Privy Council with a seat in the Cabinet. I am to be the First Commissioner of Works and Public Buildings, and therefore shall have charge of the Royal Palaces and all public buildings and offices except those belonging to the Ordnance and Admiralty. I shall also have charge of the Parks of the metropolis, of Greenwich, Richmond, Bushey and Phoenix, and Holyrood Palace; and of the public gardens at Kensington, Kew and Hampton Court. I shall have to perform many other duties in connection with the improvement of the metropolis. My office is not a very important or highly paid one, nor one for which I have any particular aptitude, but accompanied by a seat in the Cabinet it is one of much dignity, bringing me into frequent personal contact with the Queen. It will likewise make me acquainted with the details of public business, and in all probability will eventually lead to one of the higher offices in the Government of our country. I believe I am to kiss hands to-morrow.—Your affectionate Nephew,
 WILLIAM MOLESWORTH.

A letter to the same effect was posted to his mother at the same time. In the journals of Mr. Henry Reeve, the editor of the *Greville Memoirs*, the same event is thus recorded :—

The Cabinet was wisely completed by the admission of Sir William Molesworth as a representative of advanced Liberal opinions. The place first offered him was the War Office without the Cabinet, but he resolutely declined it. I endeavoured to persuade him to accept, but he gave some valid reasons for that resolution; and we endeavoured (with Delane) to persuade Lord Aber-

deen to put him in the Cabinet, which he consented to do, even though Cardwell, the President of the Board of Trade, was still excluded.

A little later, 3rd March 1853, the same journal records "a dinner at Molesworth's . . . made to bring Lord Aberdeen in contact with Bright."¹

Under the date of 30th May 1853, the *Greville Memoirs* have the following entry :—

Granville tells me that of the whole Cabinet he thinks Aberdeen has the most pluck, Gladstone a great deal, and Graham the one who has least. He speaks very well of Molesworth, sensible, courageous and conciliatory, but quite independent and plain-spoken in his opinions.

No reader will need to be reminded that it was Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet of 1852 which was responsible for the Crimean War. The friendship started at Molesworth's house between Bright and Lord Aberdeen lasted as long as the latter lived, and in 1887 Bright, in a public speech, stated : " Lord Aberdeen told me that in the whole Cabinet of which he was the chief there was only one man who backed him up in the slightest degree in favour of peace, and that was Sir William Molesworth." This of course refers to the private proceedings in the Cabinet before the outbreak of war. When once war was declared Sir William gave a cordial support to all that an energetic prosecution of the war involved.

¹ See Laughton's *Henry Reeve*, vol. i.

As First Commissioner of Works he will chiefly be remembered for his having had the courage to open Kew Gardens on Sunday. He was well aware of the intense Sabbatarianism of the electorate, and that no Minister or member of Parliament could in the slightest degree infringe it without losing votes. Most Ministers were far too timid to venture to rouse the Sabbatarian lion from his lair ; but Sir William Molesworth had never been afraid of his electors or of losing his seat, and as he was of Tom Hood's opinion that the closing of the gardens was "putting too much Sabbath into Sunday," he opened them, and they have been a delightful resort for un-Sabbatarian England ever since. To-day even the most deeply religious can hardly perceive any sin in looking at trees and flowers on the day on which the Christian Church commemorates the resurrection.

CHAPTER XVII

SOUTH AFRICA IN 1852-54

IN speeches on Colonial self-government and the reduction of Colonial expenditure delivered in 1850, 1851 and 1852, Sir William Molesworth had strongly advocated giving the Colonies responsible government and representative institutions ; after this had been done he urged that it should be clearly impressed upon them that they must no longer rely on the Home Government to carry on wars on their behalf with aboriginal tribes ; that in all matters of internal dispute they must rely on themselves, not on Downing Street ; in a word, that self-defence should be a necessary part of self-government. The repeated Kaffir wars in Cape Colony, and their costliness, were continually cited by Sir William in illustration of his views. His argument was that as long as we kept the Colonies in a state of tutelage, naturally they sent their bills to us ; give them self-govern-

ment, he urged, and make them understand that they are to be individually responsible for their own internal wars. Sir William's view was that the Kaffir was totally uncivilisable, and that missionary opinion to the contrary was a baseless delusion. We had subdued the Gael, he said, but we shall never subdue the Kaffirs; they are too numerous and too incurably savage. The boundary of British possessions in South Africa in 1850 gave us, he argued, 1000 miles of frontier to defend against the inroads of savage tribes; every extension of territory only added to the difficulties by making it necessary to defend a still more extensive frontier. He was therefore against all territorial expansion in South Africa; he even minimised the value of the Cape as a naval station. Looking upon Great Britain as essentially a naval, and not a military, power, he advocated the retention as naval stations of those places which could only be attacked by sea.

A few commanding positions with good harbours should be chosen. They should be small, isolated, salient points, easily defended, and close to the beaten paths of the ocean. I hold it to be quite contrary to the true policy of Great Britain to take military possession of large islands or vast portions of continents. I consider it to be utterly absurd for an essentially naval power to attempt the military defence of extensive coasts or long lines of frontier. That attempt has been made in South Africa with disastrous and costly results.

He then enumerates the stations of which he would advise the retention.

Gibraltar, at the mouth of the Mediterranean ; Malta, near its centre ; Bermuda, in mid-Atlantic ; Halifax, commanding the coast of North America ; Barbadoes, amongst the Islands of the West Indies ; the peninsula extremity of South Africa, on the route to India ; the Mauritius, on the same road, and commanding the Persian Gulf ; Singapore, at the entrance of the China Seas ; and perhaps Hong-Kong, amidst those seas.

These eight stations, he reckoned, could be garrisoned by 17,000 men, and ought not to cost more than £850,000 a year in military expenditure.

This is not much more than the sum which the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, with its Kaffir wars, annually costs us on an average of years. . . . If we consider, as some persons do, the whole colony of the Cape to be merely a military station, then the expense of this one ill-chosen station would be equal to the expenses of our eight best-chosen stations ; and the sum of money which we lavish on the Cape of Good Hope would, in my opinion, be sufficient to defray the military expense of all the stations which our naval policy requires.

He was consequently entirely opposed to Sir Harry Smith's policy of the expansion of British territory at the Cape, and threw ridicule on that eccentric Governor's methods of dealing with the

natives. Sir Harry Smith, who had added the Orange River Territory to British South Africa, had tried to win the confidence of the Kaffirs by calling himself their chief, and requiring them to hail him by the title "Inkosi Inkulu," and kiss his foot, and go through other curious performances, which were certainly undignified on his part as the representative of Great Britain, and also failed of their object in inspiring the Kaffirs with either friendship or awe. There are among the Pencarrow MSS. interesting extracts from letters of Sir George Napier, who had been six years Governor of Cape Colony, to his brother, Sir William Napier, highly approving of Sir William's speeches on Cape politics, and saying nothing could be more clear and correct in every way than his description of the country and its inhabitants, Kaffir and Dutch. Sir George Napier in these letters speaks vehemently against Lord Grey and the Downing Street system of governing the Cape: "They think they are Solomons, but in fact nothing but ignorance and folly are predominant." He says that Sir Harry Smith's great mistake, far worse than the mountebank tricks which the Kaffirs laughed at, was giving in to the ignorant folly of the Home Government in recalling the military force then in South Africa. He should at once, when the Kaffir war broke out afresh, and he found himself totally unprepared

for it, have recognised his mistake, and have demanded from Lord Grey the immediate sending out of reinforcements.

Sir William Molesworth gave in his speeches a graphic account of the miserable position of the more peaceable and civilisable of the native races of South Africa. They were pressed southwards from the north by hordes of warlike barbarians, while they were also pressed northwards from the south by the Europeans of Dutch descent. They were thus between the hammer and the anvil. The Colonial Office was also subjected at the same time to a double pressure. The force of public opinion at home, represented by the great missionary societies and the Aborigines Protection Society, were perpetually urging the Government to aid and protect the indigenous inhabitants of the various British colonies, especially of the Cape, from the cruelties to which they were too often subjected by the European settlers. And on the other hand other persons, with whom Sir William Molesworth associated himself, saw the situation more from the point of view of the settler, and declared that the missionaries were either unpractical visionaries, who in every dispute between white and black thought the white man bound to be wrong and the black man right, or self-seeking tradesmen, who under the cloak of a religious mission were commercial travellers engaging in

a highly remunerative trade, and demanding the protection of Great Britain in exacting the fulfilment of bargains distinguished by shrewd self-seeking rather than by altruistic benevolence. These two opposing schools were represented in London, but the parent stock of each was in the Cape itself. The English missionary was in vehement antagonism to the Dutch farmer, and the subject of their opposition to one another was the treatment of the coloured races. Sir William was more in sympathy with the settler than with the missionary, as the following extracts show, but his account of the opposing parties holds the balance fairly equal between them.

Some of the Dutch, finding South Africa to be best fitted for the rearing of flocks and herds, became a pastoral people. . . . To provide food for their augmenting flocks and herds, new and extensive pastures were required; and the Boers (as the pastoral Dutch are called) also drove out and exterminated the Hottentots. The Boers are a fine, tall, athletic race, good-humoured, but prone to anger, bred in solitude or among inferior beings whom they despise. They are self-willed, self-relying, and apt to be tyrannical.

He then refers to the wars between the Kaffirs and Boers, and the working of the commando system.

When the cattle of the Dutch were stolen, they assembled under their captains, followed the traces of

their property, seized it or its equivalent wherever they found it, and righted themselves with a strong hand. In these excursions the Boer drew no distinction between the prowling and marauding savage and the beast of prey, but shot down with equal zest the cattle-stealing lion or Kaffir, and slew the bushman as a hideous, noxious reptile.

He then describes the missionaries and their supporters.

About 1833 a strong feeling was excited in this country with regard to the treatment of the coloured races in our Colonies. This feeling was produced by the exertions of some very amiable and excellent men, who were, however, frequently very misinformed. These worthy visionaries imagined that the fierce savages of South Africa, who delight in exterminating wars, who revel in human slaughter, and whose only notion of a deity is a blood-stained demon, were true Arcadian shepherds (such as poets have fabled) living in pastoral simplicity, quietly tending their flocks and herds, and peacefully worshipping Pan and the Nymphs, till their pastorals were disturbed by the brutal and inhuman White. Under the influence of these fancies, the friends of the Aborigines believed that in every dispute between the Dutch and the Kaffir the Kaffir was invariably in the right and the Dutch invariably in the wrong, and they denounced the system of self-defence as a means adopted for gratifying the vengeance and cupidity of the Boer. These day-dreams were mistaken for realities by the excitable classes in this country, whose sensibilities are oftentimes more easily roused by fictitious wrongs abroad than by real suffering at home. Among these

credulous sentimentalists were some of the Ministers of the day, and emotion in the place of reason determined their Colonial policy.¹

The friends of the aborigines of South Africa were successful in getting an Act passed in 1836 putting all natives, as far north as the 25th degree of latitude, under British protection. It was found by experience that this virtually necessitated annexation. To protect the natives, their oppressors must be punished; to punish criminals the first requisite is to apprehend them, and the next to subject them to trial. Police and judicial systems were therefore required. Moreover, it soon became evident that it was absurd to punish British and Dutch settlers for wrongs done to natives, but not to punish natives for wrongs done to British and Dutch settlers. The annexation of the whole region became necessary, much to the regret of Sir William Molesworth, who said in the speech already quoted: "This was easily done by a proclamation of the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, and another worthless kingdom was added to our barren South African empire." The 25th degree of latitude runs about 100 miles north of Pretoria; the line, therefore, included the whole of the Orange River Colony, and considerably more than half the Transvaal.

¹ From "Materials for a Speech in Defence of the Policy of abandoning the Orange River Territory," May 1854.

The Act referred to was repealed by the Sand River Convention of 1852, and in lieu of it the Transvaal Boers undertook that no slavery should be permitted or practised in the country under their control.

The abolition of slavery in 1833 had greatly angered the Boers of Cape Colony. This was followed by a lamentable want of efficient and business-like arrangements for paying them their share of the £20,000,000 voted by the British Parliament as compensation to the slave-holders; they were defrauded of a great part of the sum voted to them; and immediately upon this came the abolition, during the Colonial Secretaryship of Lord Derby, of the commando system of self-defence among the Dutch. "The soul of goodness in things evil" helps us over many hard and difficult places; but here we have a soul of evil in things good that must give us pause. To abolish slavery, and voluntarily to submit to a taxation of £20,000,000 to compensate the slave-owners, is a piece of national generosity of which the grandchildren of the generation who did it may take a legitimate pride. But because no efficient precautions were taken to see that the millions voted went into the pockets where they were due, and because the law-makers of seventy years ago chose to legislate for South Africa in ignorance of the facts of life on the veldt and the karoo, England

has been dogged by trouble and disaster in South Africa from that time to this. The great trek of 1836 was the first result of the action just described. The trek led to a formidable political difficulty. The trekkers either were or were not British subjects. If they were not, England had no further responsibility for them, either to defend them against the attacks of savage tribes, or to punish them for deeds of cruelty to natives; but if they were British subjects, then they must be both protected and governed; military organisation and judicial and police administration must be established at great cost in the wilds of Africa. There are great and obvious disadvantages in having a political No-man's-land on your frontier: if criminals and ne'er-do-weels can escape punishment by stepping across an imaginary boundary line, the lives of those who love peace and order on either side of that line are not made happier thereby. Almost every colonising nation has discovered the force of circumstances which make constant extensions of territory almost inevitable. Missionaries in South Africa, in the period under review, were constantly urging the English Government to extend British territory, in order mainly to protect the natives from oppression, and also because of the moral disadvantages of having a political Alsatia on the borders of a newly settled community.

In the early history of our Colonies and Dependencies mistakes can often be traced to the fact that English statesmen could not bring themselves to believe that anything better could exist than a reproduction of the social and economic conditions of the mother country. Thus the Clergy Reserves of Canada were a futile attempt at reproducing the English glebe system, heedless of the fact that the untrodden forests of Canada were absolutely unlike the pastures and corn lands of England. The zemindars and ryots of Bengal were taken for Indian reproductions of landlord and tenant at home, and treated as such. In Natal, a Secretary of State, being entirely ignorant of the physical state of South Africa, fancied that the size of farms should not much exceed the size of farms in England, and he gave orders to that effect to the Colonial Governor. The carrying out of this order gave rise to intense hostility against English administration on the part of the Dutch farmers. Again, with regard to the commando system, we did not take sufficient heed of what the conditions of life in South Africa were. The Boer and Kaffir were regarded as the equivalent of the English farmer and labourer. It needs some imagination to picture the position and conditions of life of a white family living in the vast expanses of South Africa, in entire isolation from other Europeans, and surrounded by swarms of savages,

or, to put it at its best, very imperfectly civilised natives ; and this imagination was conspicuous by its absence when the commando system was abolished and no really efficient military or police protection substituted for it.

Enough has perhaps been said to explain why it was that Sir William Molesworth, who had so strongly grasped the conception of the Imperial idea in Australia and Canada, was a Little Englander in South Africa. He had made it the work of his life to promote the development of the Colonial Empire of Great Britain in Australia, New Zealand and Canada, on the lines of making those Colonies self-governing parts of a federated Empire. South Africa, he believed, would never form part of such an Empire. He was convinced that it always had been, and always would be, worthless ; that roads could never be made in it ; that for want of roads commerce could never develop. That men of English blood, understanding and sympathising with English political institutions and ideals of self-government, would never form any considerable part of the population ; the native population he regarded as incurably degraded. South Africa was in his eyes the Ugly Duckling of the Colonial flock ; and his schemes for the development of the Australian and other Colonies were thwarted by the expenses of the constantly recurring Kaffir wars—this is a subject to which he recurs again

and again, and counts up the millions which these fruitless (as he considered them) contests with savages had cost us. Therefore he opposed every extension of British territory in South Africa, and prepared a speech in 1854 which he never delivered, but the materials for which he published, in defence of the policy of abandoning the Orange River Territory by the Government of which he was a member. Sir William's premises were wrong, and from them he drew what nearly all Englishmen now know to be a false conclusion. It is the one great mistake of his otherwise extraordinarily far-seeing and enlightened Colonial policy. In judging it we should not forget that we are doing so by the light of nearly fifty years' more experience than were at his disposal. In 1853 railway enterprise was in its infancy even in Europe; telegraphic communication across the ocean was unknown.¹ The commercial development of South Africa had hardly begun. Still, when all possible excuses have been made, the special circumstances of the abandonment of the Orange River Territory can never be recalled by Englishmen without shame. A war had been begun in 1852 with the powerful Basuto chief, Moshesh; Sir George Cathcart, who commanded the British forces, had very much underestimated the strength and skill of the enemy. After one indecisive engagement, which had re-

¹ The first Atlantic cable was laid in 1858.

vealed the formidable character of the Basuto army, Moshesh very craftily made overtures for peace. These were accepted; and then a policy of scuttle was adopted, leaving the military strength of the Basutos as formidable as ever. The Commissioner sent out from England to conduct the policy of abandonment, Sir George Clerk, tried in vain to get a sanction from the European settlers behind which England could have sheltered herself in her withdrawal on the plea that it was approved by the white inhabitants of the district. He called upon them to elect a body of representatives to take over the government of the country. The representatives assembled; they consisted of seventy-six Dutch and nineteen English members, and they objected in the strongest terms to their abandonment by Great Britain. The few who approved were termed "the well-disposed," while those who desired to maintain the British connection were called "the obstructionists." A violently anti-British Boer from the Transvaal, named Stander, was employed by the British Commissioner to go about the country making speeches against the British connection, and representing both in public speech and in private conversation that it meant nothing but restraint, without the advantage of affording protection against the native tribes. The assembly sent two representatives to England to implore the Government

not to abandon them ; but they met with no success.¹ As much pains and ingenuity were expended to rid us of the Orange River Colony as might have sufficed to bind it to us for ever. If the story of the Abyssinian Expedition thrills us with national pride, the story of the abandonment of the Orange River Territory reduces us again to an attitude of penitence and humiliation. There is consolation in thinking how sharply we have been punished for our pusillanimity.

The Royal Proclamation withdrawing from the Sovereignty of the Orange River Territory was signed on 30th January 1854. One excuse may be offered. All through 1853 war clouds had been gathering in Europe. On 21st February 1854 diplomatic relations between Russia and the allied powers of England and France came to an end, and the Crimean War began almost immediately afterwards. England doubtless felt that she needed all her military strength in the European War in which she was about to engage. Still nothing can palliate the meanness of the scuttle in South Africa. In the speech justifying the abandonment Sir William Molesworth reiterated the objections he had frequently felt and expressed against the extension of British territory in South Africa, but he says nothing of the peculiar circum-

¹ See Egerton's *British Colonial Policy*, and Theal's *South Africa* (Story of the Nations Series).

stances of the abandonment—the recent abortive struggle with Moshesh and the nearly unanimous protest of the settlers, Dutch as well as British, against the withdrawal of England. If no defence was offered by Sir William on these points, it may well be felt that there was none to offer.

In 1878, when Mr. J. P. S. Kruger and Mr. Joubert came to England to protest against the English annexation of the Transvaal, they asked and obtained of Sir William Molesworth's widow permission to republish the "Materials for a speech in defence of the policy of abandoning the Orange River Territory," which had been published originally in May 1854. On 25th June 1854 Sir George Grey, M.P., who was Home Secretary in Lord Palmerston's Government in 1855, wrote to Sir William that he had never read anything with greater pleasure than this defence of the policy of abandoning the Orange River Territory. "It is one of the clearest and most interesting statements regarding the state of the country which I have ever seen." In 1860, the other Sir George Grey, the Colonial statesman, wrote sadly from the Cape, of which he was then Governor, to the Colonial Office, describing the distracted state of the Orange Free State, which he said was due to independence having been thrust upon it against the wishes of nearly all its most influential inhabitants.

CHAPTER XVIII

CLOSING YEARS

SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH became a member of Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet on almost the last day of the year 1852. He was therefore jointly responsible with the rest of the Cabinet for the policy which culminated in the outbreak of war with Russia in the spring of 1854. It has been already mentioned that John Bright stated in a public speech, in 1887, that Lord Aberdeen had told him that in the discussions in the Cabinet before the declaration of war Sir William Molesworth more than any other Minister had supported him in his desire for peace. When war actually began, however, Sir William was wholly desirous of carrying it on with vigour, and facing all the sacrifices which it entailed. It is little surprising, therefore, that the peace-at-any-price party, the leaders of which were his old friends and associates in the House of Commons, looked upon him as a

deserter, and he was bitterly attacked as such by Cobden and Bright. On one of these occasions, June 1855, Cobden challenged Molesworth to read aloud in public the speech he had made at Leeds, fifteen years before, in favour of peace when it had appeared probable that hostilities would break out between England and France over the Eastern question. A few days later Molesworth accepted the challenge, and in a crowded House read out extracts from his Leeds speech of 1840, which Cobden must have been rather surprised to find strongly supported an alliance with France against Russia for the protection of Turkey. The speech was, in fact, a remarkable illustration of the consistency of Sir William Molesworth's attitude in foreign politics. In his statement in the House in reply to Cobden, Sir William said :—

With regard to the speech respecting the Syrian question, it was delivered at Leeds fifteen years ago. On referring to it, I found that so far from its being, as the hon. gentleman said, utterly at variance with my present opinions, it was in some respects remarkably in accordance with my present views. For in that speech I alluded to and foreshadowed the possible necessity of a war similar to that in which we are now engaged—namely, a war in which France and England should be allied to protect Turkey against Russia. The hon. gentleman wished the other night that I could be forced to read that speech at the table of the House. With the

permission of the House, I will read short extracts from it. I said, speaking of the alliance with Russia and the alienation of France, produced by our conduct on the Syrian question, which I was afraid would produce a war with France—

“We have formed an alliance with Russia, whose interests are hostile to our own in the East. We have lost the alliance of France, the only European power which has an interest equally strong, and a desire equally urgent with ourselves, to prevent the occupation of Constantinople by Russia. Who does not perceive that every wound inflicted in France by England, or in England by France, must be a source of rejoicing to the northern barbarian—an obstacle removed from his path to Constantinople?” . . .

After some further extracts from the speech of 1840, he concluded with this one :—

Let us say to Russia, we will not permit you to make an attempt to assume to yourself the sovereignty of the Turkish Empire. If you presume to interfere in affairs which are not your own and menace Constantinople, France, united with England, will compel you to desist.

The judgment of posterity has very generally been pronounced in favour of Bright and Cobden and against Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet on the policy of the Crimean War, but the attack of the two great leaders of the peace party in 1855 upon Sir William Molesworth, on the ground of inconsistency, signally failed. The truth is, that never, even in his most youthful days, did he speak at

random, or without very careful study and diligent search into the facts bearing on the subject of his speeches. Thus an unbroken harmony is to be found between his official and unofficial utterances. He received a promise from Lord Aberdeen before he joined his Cabinet that he should be free to speak and vote in support of the Ballot, whatever the opinions of his colleagues in the Cabinet might be on secret voting; and on 13th June 1854 from the Government bench of the House of Commons he spoke in favour of the Ballot, and addressed his arguments in the main to replying to his colleague, Lord Palmerston, who had used the stock arguments against the Ballot in a speech earlier in the debate. Again, on another subject, the payment of the interest by England on the Russo-Dutch loan, he was able, as a Minister, to repeat with additional emphasis the conclusive arguments he had used several years earlier, as an independent member, to show that England was bound by every consideration of honour and policy to continue to pay the interest as long as it was due. When at the peace of 1814 England agreed to buy of the King of the Netherlands the Cape, Demerara and some other Dutch Colonial possessions for £6,000,000, the sum was in part paid by England taking upon herself obligations incurred by the Netherlands to Russia. By the Convention signed in London in May 1815 England was

bound to continue to pay interest on the sum in question as long as Holland and Belgium were united. Holland and Belgium separated in 1830. Russia objected and offered to send an army of 60,000 men to Holland to compel Belgium to remain part of the Dutch kingdom. England, on the other hand, favoured the separation of Belgium from Holland, and entered into a renewed engagement with Russia to continue to pay the interest on the Russo-Dutch loan, even in the event of war breaking out between Great Britain and Russia. These facts had only to be stated in the House of Commons, with the clearness of which Sir William Molesworth was a master, to make it evident that to repudiate the payment of interest would either be an act of bankruptcy or of barbarism. He utterly smashed the case for withholding it, and after hearing him the House rejected the motion for doing so by more than eleven to one. On the subject of the Clergy Reserves of Canada, Sir William was able, as a Minister, to give effect to the principles he had always maintained as an independent member. He spoke on behalf of the Government on this subject on 3rd March 1853, on the second reading of a Bill for transferring to the Canadian Legislature the control of this vexed question. He entreated the House of Commons not only to leave the Clergy Reserves to be settled by Canada, but to accept as the

settled principle of British Colonial policy that all questions affecting exclusively the local interests of a Colony should be dealt with by the Colonial Legislatures.

The duties of his office were discharged by Molesworth with the thoroughness which characterised everything he undertook. He had to prepare plans for the building of a new National Gallery, and for this purpose he caused the plans of every great picture gallery in Europe to be compared and examined—a labour the results of which are said to have been neglected by his successor. He was responsible for the laying out of Victoria Park, and the ornamental gardening in the London parks was initiated by him; his knowledge of trees and of horticulture made his official connection with Kew peculiarly agreeable to him.

Complimentary recognition of his position as a public man was not wanting to him. In September 1854 he received the Freedom of the City of Edinburgh. In a speech acknowledging the honour, he referred to his connection, both by birth and education, with the city of which he had become a citizen.

By birth I am half a Scotchman. I am proud of my Scotch blood, and of belonging to the same family as David Hume, the historian and philosopher. In the University of Edinburgh I was educated under Leslie, Jamieson, and other eminent professors. In my youth

I was so fortunate as to enjoy the acquaintance and to profit by the conversation of Sir Walter Scott, Jeffrey, Brewster, Sir William Hamilton, Sir John Sinclair, James Mill, and other distinguished Scotchmen. I am therefore attached to Edinburgh by feelings of gratitude, affection, and admiration ; and the strength of those feelings has not diminished by an absence of many years. Since I left Edinburgh I have visited many of the most celebrated cities in Europe, but none of them ever appeared to me to compare in beauty with the metropolis of Scotland.

The breaking up of Lord Aberdeen's Ministry early in 1855 was caused by the popular dissatisfaction with the way in which the war had been carried on, and especially by the collapse of the commissariat and by the inadequate provision of shelter and clothing for our troops. Lord Derby was invited by the Queen to form a Government, but he failed to do so. A similar invitation was extended to Lord John Russell with the same result. Lord Palmerston then was sent for and formed a Government. There was a general reshuffling of the cards, and the curious plan, adhered to up to that time, of combining the offices of Secretary for War and the Colonies, was abandoned. Lord John Russell, who was away attending the Vienna Conference at the time the Government was formed, was made Secretary of State for the Colonies when he returned. The political wise-acres expressed much surprise at his willingness to

serve under his old enemy, Palmerston. Gladstone, Sidney Herbert and Graham resigned. Molesworth continued in his office as Chief Commissioner of Works.

The Vienna Congress failed in its object of bringing about a cessation of hostilities. Lord John Russell's part in it was very far from pleasing his chief or the country, and his speeches when he returned were considered to be very inconsistent with the line he had taken in Vienna. In July Sir E. B. Lytton gave notice of a vote of censure on Lord John's conduct of the negotiations, and he, anticipating the success of the motion, resigned his office and left the Government. His place as Secretary of State for the Colonies was offered by Lord Palmerston to Sir William Molesworth and accepted by him. It was the achievement of a worthy and dignified ambition. At the age of forty-five he found himself as a Cabinet Minister at the head of that department of the State to the subject of which the best years of his life and best powers of his mind had been devoted.

When Lord Palmerston was re-forming his Government in February 1855, after the resignation of Gladstone, Graham and Sidney Herbert, Sir William Molesworth wrote a letter to him containing some suggestions on the reconstruction of the Cabinet. The loss of the Peelite section he considered a gain rather than the reverse. He

pressed strongly, however, for the promotion of Cardwell to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. "He is a sound and able man, would do the duties of that office well and deserves promotion." He also urged the promotion of Mr. Baines (his old colleague at Leeds) to the India Board.

He is an able man and a *new* one. The places vacated by Cardwell and Baines should, I think, be filled by Lowe and F. Peel, and I should attach great importance to your getting Layard to take Peel's place of Under-Secretary of War. In the event of Wood refusing to go to the Admiralty and Seymour becoming First Lord, I should recommend that Baines be made Home Secretary, and that Sir George Grey should return to the Colonies. And you must permit me to add, in consequence of the deep interest I take in the administration of the Colonies, that I should be glad to see Sir George Grey again in that office, and that I did not altogether approve of the appointment of a gentleman¹ unfamiliar with Colonial affairs, though, in the peculiar circumstances of the formation of your Government, I felt myself precluded from objecting to that appointment.

When Lord John Russell's resignation of the Colonial Secretaryship in July 1855 was followed by its acceptance by Sir William Molesworth, the appointment was hailed by the press both at home and in the Colonies as the best which had ever been made.

¹ Mr. Sidney Herbert.

The *Times* of 21st July 1855 said :—

It would be difficult to exaggerate the services which during his Parliamentary career the new Colonial Secretary had rendered to the cause of the Colonies, and the degree in which, by so doing, he had consolidated and conciliated the remoter portions of this great Empire. . . . If not the founder, he may be fairly termed the regenerator and purifier of that great group of dependencies. . . . Much will be expected of such a Minister, and Sir William Molesworth must be indefatigable and successful if he overcome the formidable rivalry of his own already achieved reputation.

The Colonial press was equally enthusiastic in approval of the new appointment, and private letters from the Colonies expressed the high degree of satisfaction which had been produced. In one of these a Canadian statesman, writing to one of Molesworth's friends, said, "Do tell Sir William that he has made us a part of the empire, *de facto*. God bless him for it, say I." The share which ocean telegraphy has had in bridging the distance between England and the Colonies is best appreciated by a consideration of the state of things before it existed. Sir William's appointment was made at the end of July. It was not till the beginning of November that news of it was received in Australia. On 3rd November *The Adelaide Observer*, *The Launceston Examiner*, and other Australian papers contained articles rejoicing over

it. But by that time, the hand and brain from which so much had been expected and hoped were cold in death, and Sir William's family had the bitter task of reading these eulogies when they only served to deepen their sense of desolation and loss.

The transfer of a Minister from one office to another at that time necessitated re-election. Sir William did not encounter any opposition in Southwark when he appealed for the last time to the electorate. But a speech which he made to his constituents led to a renewal of the political quarrel between himself and the leaders of the extreme peace party in the House of Commons. A day or two before Sir William had vacated his seat, there had been a division in the House of Commons on the subject of a Turkish loan, in which three usually antagonistic parties had united in an endeavour to defeat the Government: these were (1) the Conservatives; (2) the Peace party, represented by Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright; and (3) the Peelites who had lately resigned office, represented by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Sidney Herbert. Sir William in an election speech had implied that this combination was a conspiracy, and when he returned to the House of Commons, 3rd August 1855, he was bitterly attacked. The heated atmosphere of current politics at that moment is demonstrated by the usually gentle Cobden making

a fierce onslaught on Molesworth and saying that he was "utterly unfaithful and utterly unworthy of the confidence of any political party." Gladstone followed, also in a hostile speech, mainly devoted to the point that the combination of parties voting against the Government in the previous week had been accidental and not concerted, and therefore had none of the elements of a conspiracy. Sir William in his reply accepted this statement unreservedly, but in reference to Cobden's attacks said that while he had been thoroughly at one with the honourable gentleman, the member for the West Riding, on the subject of Free Trade, he had never shared his views on the possibility of universal peace. But Cobden refused to be reconciled or to withdraw the bitter charges he had made. Why do those who profess peace principles so often apply them only to the region of physical conflict? It not infrequently appears that the peace-at-any-price man is even below the average fighting animal in the power of bringing the qualities of gentleness and generosity to aid the judgment in those regions where the conflict is between opposing schools of thought. Is it that the fighting instinct must have some outlet, and that those who are, for conscience' sake, debarred from taking part even vicariously, in physical conflict, impart ten times more bitterness into the controversial battle?

Sir William Molesworth was ever a fighter, but the time was now very near when "the glory and the grief of battle won or lost" would be over for him for ever. He was not in the Colonial Office long enough to give further effect to any of his cherished schemes for Colonial reform. Almost his only official act in the House of Commons as Colonial Secretary was moving and carrying, on the advice of the Colonial statesman, the great Sir George Grey, then Governor of Cape Colony, a vote of £40,000 to be used for educating and otherwise improving the condition of the Kaffirs. This was on 31st July. The end of the session nearly always found Sir William in a condition of physical exhaustion, which he endeavoured to repair by resort to the pure air of Cornwall or of the Highlands of Scotland; but in 1855 the anxieties connected with his new office, and also the stress and strain on the whole Government caused by the Crimean War, combined to detain him in London. On 10th September 1855 he wrote to his sister, Mrs. Ford:—

COLONIAL OFFICE.

MY DEAR MARY—The south side of Sebastopol has fallen. I send you the telegraphic message just received.

W. MOLESWORTH.

The accompanying message ran :—

VARNNA, 9.30.—During the night the Russians have sunk all the remainder of the line of battleships in the harbour.

September 9.

VARNNA, 9.30.—Sebastopol is in the possession of the Allies. The enemy during the night have evacuated the south side after exploding their magazines and setting fire to the whole of the town. All the men-of-war were burnt during the night, with the exception of three steamers which are flying about the harbour.

This was the last letter which Mrs. Ford ever received from her brother. His illness began almost immediately after it had been written. His old friend and physician, Dr. Elliotson, was called in after Sir William had been ailing for some time, and pronounced him to be most dangerously ill from gastric fever. The end can best be told in the words of his devoted sister. After describing the beginning of his illness, Mr. Ford continues in a letter, written to an intimate friend of the family :—

On Tuesday I came up. I asked that Elliotson might be called in. My prayer was granted. Elliotson had been for twenty-three years in constant attendance, and had pulled him through desperate illnesses, and knew his constitution thoroughly. On Wednesday Elliotson said

all hope was gone. He is dying in the most heroic manner, with all his faculties about him, perfectly resigned, and leaves his wealth, his great position, the ambition of his life granted, without a murmur, yet he has struggled hard for life.

12 o'clock.—He still lives, but is sinking rapidly. . . . If he had a particle of constitution left he might have been saved, for the disease has been conquered, but the life he has led of constant excitement for the last year and a half has destroyed him. Oh, vanity of vanities! I have seen him once. He held out his hand to me; I kissed it twice. The face looks so handsome; all fulness gone. The beautiful features so wasted have become quite sculpturesque. The eye is not blue, but the most lovely violet. He suffers no pain. He swallowed during the night a pint of milk, but refuses all stimulants. When Johnstone, the surgeon, offered him them this morning he looked him full in the face, and said, "I will take it if you swear to me that I have a chance of life." He reasons most lucidly.

A later letter to the same friend tells that the end came quite painlessly on 22nd October, at twelve o'clock.

Sir William showed to the last moment of his life the most perfect fortitude and self-possession. He gave directions about his funeral, that it should be plain and unostentatious, "but like a gentleman's"; the spot chosen was to be bright and sunny, and the stone recording his name of Cornish granite. His old servant MacLean was summoned from Pencarrow, and was welcomed by his dying



Walker & Gokerell, p.h. sc.

*Memorial Bronze Relief.
in St. George's Free Library, Southwark,
by George Frampton, A.R.A.*

master with a smile and a parting shake of the hand. When all was over, Mrs. Ford writes that "the faithful old man shut himself up with the body and passed the long night with the loved remains, weeping over his Bible."

Sir William Molesworth was deeply mourned both in England and in the Colonies. It is seldom that a man dying at the age of forty-five has been able to accomplish so much ; and by those who knew him best it was believed that what he had done was only an earnest of what was to come ; but these were hopes destined never to be fulfilled.

He had seen as very few besides himself saw at that time, that with the destruction of the system of arbitrary government by the Colonial Office, colonists would become true and loyal citizens of the British Empire. He had advocated in 1850 the admission into the British Parliament of representatives from the Colonies. His dream is in this last respect still unfulfilled, but who can say that we are not appreciably nearing its fulfilment ?

Lord Palmerston, writing to Andalusia, Lady Molesworth, to express his sympathy with her on her husband's death, thus summed up the impression which Molesworth had made upon his colleagues.

To me, and to my colleagues and the country, his loss has indeed been great. We have lost a friend whom

we loved and valued, as a sharer in our toils, and an aid in our difficulties. We have lost a thorough English gentleman, and a thorough English statesman, and much indeed is comprehended in these two terms.

For singleness of mind, honesty of purpose, clearness of judgment, faithfulness of conduct, courage in difficulties, and equanimity in success he was never surpassed, and deeply must any nation lament the premature loss of such a man.

APPENDIX

DESCENT OF SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH, BART., M.P.

HENDER MOLESWORTH, the first Baronet (1689), was twice married but died childless. He was succeeded by his brother,

JOHN, 2nd Bart., married Margery, daughter of Thomas Wise of Sidenham, Devon.

JOHN, 3rd Bart., married Jane, daughter of John Arcscott of Tetcott, Devon.

JOHN, 4th Bart., died 1766, married Barbara, 2nd daughter and co-heiress of Sir Nicholas Morrice, Bart., of Werrington, Devon.

JOHN, 5th Bart., died 1775, married Frances, daughter and co-heiress of James Smith, Esq., of St. Andries, Somerset.

WILLIAM, 6th Bart., died 1798, married Catherine Treby, daughter of Admiral Paul Henry Ourry, Commissioner of Plymouth Dockyard.

ARSCOTT OURRY, 7th Bart., died 1823, married Mary, daughter of Patrick Brown, Esq., of Edinburgh.

WILLIAM, 8th Bart., born 1810, married Andalusia, widow of Mr. Temple West; died childless in 1855; was succeeded by his cousin, Hugh H. Molesworth.

LIST OF SIR WILLIAM MOLESWORTH'S
HOUSE OF COMMONS SPEECHES ON
COLONIAL SUBJECTS.

1. On Canada, 6th March 1837.
2. On second reading of Canada Bill, 23rd January 1838.
3. State of the Colonies, 6th March 1838.
4. On Colonial Lands, 27th June 1839.
5. On Transportation, 5th May 1840.
6. On Convict Discipline, 3rd June 1847.
7. On Colonial Expenditure, 25th July 1848.
8. For a Royal Commission to inquire into the Administration of the Colonies, 25th June 1849.
9. On the introduction of Lord John Russell's Bill for the better government of the Australian Colonies, 8th February 1850.
10. On second reading of same Bill, 18th February 1850.
11. On Mr. Walpole's motion to establish two Houses of Legislature in New South Wales and Victoria respectively, 22nd March 1850.
12. In Committee on Bill for better government of the Australian Colonies, 19th April 1850.
13. Motion to recommit the same Bill, 6th May 1850.
14. Motion for reduction of Colonial Expenditure, 10th April 1851.
15. Motion to discontinue Transportation to Van Diemen's Land, 20th May 1851.
16. On Kaffir Wars, 5th April 1852.
17. On second reading of the Clergy Reserves (Canada) Bill, 5th March 1853.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF CHIEF
EVENTS IN SIR WILLIAM MOLES-
WORTH'S LIFE.

1810. Born in London, 23rd May.
1823. Father died.
1824. Taken to Edinburgh for education.
1826. Becomes a student of the University of Edinburgh.
1827. Enters St. John's College, Cambridge. Migrates to Trinity.
1828. Leaves Cambridge for Germany.
1829. Duel. Short visit to England. Visits Rome.
1830. In Rome and other Italian towns.
1831. Returns to England to keep his majority. Is accepted as Liberal candidate for East Cornwall.
1832. Elected for East Cornwall.
1833. First session of Reformed Parliament. Forms friendship with Mr. and Mrs. Grote.
1834. Joins the newly-founded South Australian Association.
1835. Founds *The London Review*, afterwards *The London and Westminster*. Seconds Grote's motion in the House of Commons in favour of the Ballot. Becomes a Fellow of the Royal Society.
- 1835-6. Re-elected for East Cornwall.
1836. Founds the Reform Club. Speech on the Orange Lodges. Death of Miss Elizabeth Molesworth.
1837. Elected for Leeds. New Zealand Association founded. Moves for Select Committee on Transportation.

1838. Chairman of Transportation Committee. Begins the edition of Hobbes. Speeches on Canada. Supports Lord Durham.
1839. Mr. Francis Molesworth emigrates to New Zealand.
1840. Death of Lord Durham. Peace meeting at Leeds.
1841. General Election. Retires from Leeds and from Parliament. Works at the edition of Hobbes.
1842. Death of his brother, Mr. A. O. Molesworth.
1844. Marries Mrs. Temple West.
1845. Elected again to the House of Commons as member for Southwark.
1846. Death of his brother, Mr. Francis A. Molesworth.
- 1847-8-9. Work in the House of Commons for Colonial Reform.
1850. Constitutions granted to the Australasian Colonies.
1851. Last speech against Transportation.
- 1852. Joins the Earl of Aberdeen's Administration as First Commissioner of Works with a seat in the Cabinet.
1853. Final Abolition of Transportation except in Western Australia.
1854. Beginning of the Crimean War.
1855. Joins Lord Palmerston's Government. Becomes Secretary of State for the Colonies in July. Dies on 22nd October.

INDEX

- Abercrombie, the Rt. Hon. James, 74 *n.*
 Aberdeen, Earl of, 155-156, 306-308
 Abolition of slavery, 318
 Abyssinian Expedition, 296
 Adelaide, Queen, unpopularity of, 33
 Argyll, Duke of, 306
 Arnold, Matthew, 107
 "Auditor of Cornwall," John Molesworth, 7
 Austin, Charles, 70, 90, 95, 167, 206-208, 212, 228, 232, 235, 241
 Austin, Mrs. John, 52, 102, 158, 295
- Bain, Prof. A., *Life of James Mill*, 66
 Baines, Sir Edward, M.P., 128, 216, 334
 Barnard, Mr., Sir William's duel with, 19, 20, 30
 Baronetcy, date of the Molesworth, 7
 Behnes, Mr., the sculptor, portrait busts of Sir Wm. Molesworth by, 239
 Bentham, J., 2, 17, 47, 154
 Birmingham Reformers, 82
 Boers angered by abolition of slavery, 318
 "Brenda," 227
 Bright, the Rt. Hon. John, M.P., 271, 272, 308, 326, 336
 Brougham, Lord, 60, 63, 69, 190, 193
 Brown, Captain, marriage of, to Miss Hume, 9, 10
 Buller, Charles, 2, 3, 12, 28, 35, 40, 41, 46, 70, 72, 79, 80, 91, 115, 138, 157, 161, 193, 200, 217, 273; death of, 274
 Byron, Lady, 48
- Cambridge University in 1827-28, 15-19
 Canada, rebellion in 1837-8, 3, 182-205; Lord Durham in, 65; Clergy Reserves in, 320, 330
 Canterbury, Lord (Manners Sutton), 61, 73 *n.*
 Cape Colony successfully resists being made convict settlement, 151, 284
 Cardwell, Mr. E. (afterwards Lord), 308, 334
 Carlyle, Thomas, on Charles Buller, 12; on Sir Wm. Molesworth, 46; on Grote, 51; his *Oliver Cromwell*, 59
 Clarence, Duke of, afterwards William IV., 89
 Clay, Rev. J., on transportation, 142
 Clergy Reserves in Canada, 320, 330
 Cobden, R., 2, 155, 244, 271, 272, 327, 336
 Collier, Mr. R. P. (afterwards Lord Monkswell), 239
 Colonial Office, attacks on, 151, 277
 Colonial press, rejoicings of, upon Sir Wm. Molesworth's appointment to Colonial Office, 335
 Colonisation Society, the, 135-139
 Committee on Transportation, Select, 140

- Corn Laws, abolition of, 116, 242
 Cornwall, East, Sir Wm. Molesworth returned for, 40, 54; retires from representation of, 115-117
 Cranworth, Lord, 306
 Crimean War, 324, 326
 Cumberland, Duke of, Grand Master of Orange Lodges, 87-91, 96-99
- Darwin, Charles, 16
 Delane, Mr., Editor of the *Times*, 307
 Demarchi, Signor, 13
 Denison, Sir William, Governor of Van Diemen's Land, 285
 Derby, Earl of, 304, 318
 De Tocqueville, 64
 Dietz, Miss, 61
 Disraeli, the Rt. Hon. Benjamin, afterwards Lord Beaconsfield, 155
 Don Pacifico debate, 295
 Dorsetshire labourers sentenced to transportation, 85
 Duel between Mr. Barnard and Sir Wm. Molesworth, 19, 20, 30
 Duppa, Mr. E., 18, 61, 95, 170
 Durham, Lord, 2, 3, 65, 138 *n.*, 188-205, 273, 274
- Ecclesiastical Titles Act, 304
 Edinburgh confers its freedom on Sir Wm. Molesworth, 331
 Education grant extended to Roman Catholic Schools, 261
 Education, National, 54
 Egerton, Mr. Hugh, his *British Colonial Policy*, 163, 324 *n.*
 Ellice, Mr., 77
 Elliotson, Dr., Sir Wm. Molesworth's friend and physician, 47
 Erskine, Lord, British Minister in Munich, 14, 25, 30
 Ewart, Mr., M.P., 75
- Fairman, Colonel, 88, 89
 Falconer, Mr., 120, 124
 Fawcett, Henry, as a candidate for Southwark, 5
 Ford, Mr. Richard, unpublished memoir of Sir Wm. Molesworth by, 39 *n.*
- Ford, Mrs. R., of Pencarrow, sister of Sir Wm. Molesworth, 5, 11 *n.*, 60, 166, 180, 230, 338
 Free Trade, 115, 243, 264, 300
- Garnett, Dr., *Life of Wakefield*, 3, 136-138, 163, 194, 195
 General Election of 1832, 134; of 1834-5, 134, 219; of 1837, 133, 134, 219; of 1841, 219, 243; of 1852, 302
 Gladstone, the Rt. Hon. W. E., 247, 272, 287, 297, 306, 308, 333, 336, 337
 Glenelg, Lord, Colonial Secretary, 151, 159, 160, 178
 Gordon, Admiral, 155
 Graham, Sir James, 306, 333
 Grand National Trades' Union, 85
 Grant, Mr. Charles (*see* Glenelg)
 Granville, Earl, 306
 Grey, Lord, 77, 191; break up of his majority of 1832, 57
 Grey, Lord (son of the above), supports transportation, 141, 287
 Grey, Sir George (Colonial statesman), 325
 Grey, Sir George, M.P. (English politician), 140, 150, 325, 334
 Grote, Mr. and Mrs., 46-52, 61, 62, 63, 68, 80, 85, 102, 117, 120, 121, 122, 124, 125, 133, 166, 188, 210-216, 219, 233-237, 241-242, 243, 244
 "Gurth," 227
- Hamilton, Sir William, 13, 15
 Hardinge, Sir H., 100
 Haywood, witness in case against the Orange Lodges, 90
 Herbert, the Hon. Sidney, 306, 333, 334 *n.*, 336
 Hobbes, Thomas, edition of Works by Sir Wm. Molesworth, 112, 206-213, 233, 245; dedication to Mr. Grote, 212, 213; defence of, at Southwark election, 249
 Hume, "the beautiful Betsy," 9
 Hume, the family of David, association with the Molesworths, 9, 331

- Hume, Joseph, M.P., 75, 90, 92, 124, 243
 Huxley, Mr. T. H., 106, 256
- Irish famine, 265
- Jeffrey, 13
 Joubert, Mr. P., 325
- Kaffir wars, 310
 Kent, Duchess of, 99
 Kenyon, Lord, Deputy Grand Master of Orange Lodges, 88, 90
 Kew Gardens opened on Sunday by Sir Wm. Molesworth, 309
 Kinloch, Sir Alexander, 9, 10
 Kipling, Mr. Rudyard, 265.
 Kruger, Mr., 325
- Lansdowne, the Marquis of, 306
 Leader, Mr. John Temple, 28, 71, 80, 243
 Leeds, Sir Wm. Molesworth M.P. for, 128-132; peace meeting at, in 1840, 216
London Review, the (afterwards *London and Westminster*), 58, 100, 109, 125
 Lowe, Sir Hudson, 22
 Lowe, Mr. R., 334
 Lytton, Sir E. B., 333
- Macaulay, his description of House of Commons in 1831, 36; on Maynooth grant, 248 *n.*
 MacLean, Sir William's servant, 21, 26-27, 341
 "Maclise Portrait Gallery," 17, 72
 Malt tax, division on, 50
 Manchester School on the Colonies, 156
 Martineau, Miss H., her *History of the Thirty Years' Peace*, 1, 86 *n.*, 193
 Mathews, Charles, 27
 Maynooth grant, 246, 303
 Melbourne, Lord, 33, 190, 193, 200
 Miall, Mr. Edward, contests Southwark against Sir Wm. Molesworth, 251
- Mill, Mr. James, 47, 58; death of, 66
 Mill, Mr. J. S., 2, 3, 47, 58, 60, 63, 65, 109, 120, 127, 138, 157, 194, 200, 202, 203, 209, 217
 Milnes, Mr. Monckton (afterwards Lord Houghton), 235
 Mitchell, Major, 22-23
 Molesworth family, antiquity of, 7
 Molesworth, Sir Arscott Ourry, father of Sir William, 9, 10; death of, 10
 Molesworth, Lady, mother of Sir William, 9, 10, 12, 14, 21, 65, 92, 93, 180
 Molesworth, Mr. A. O., 29, 94; death of, 240
 Molesworth, Andalusia, Lady, 240, 341
 Molesworth, Miss Caroline (Sir Wm. Molesworth's aunt), 230
 Molesworth, Miss Elizabeth, 23, 32, 44, 56; death of, 103
 Molesworth, Mr. Francis Alexander, 101, 102, 122, 165; death of, 167
 Molesworth, Hender, President of the Council of Jamaica, 1684, and first Baronet, 7
 Molesworth, John, "Auditor of Cornwall," settles at Pencarrow, 7
 Molesworth, Miss Mary (afterwards Mrs. Ford), 60, 166, 180, 230, 338
 Molesworth, Walter de, 7
 Molesworth, Rev. William, 15, 43, 45
 Molesworth, Sir William, 2; position as a Colonial statesman, 3; descent from the Hume family, 9; receives freedom of the city of Edinburgh, 9, 331; birth of, 10; delicate health of, 11, 114, 206; brothers and sisters of, 11 *n.*; education of, 11, 12; at Edinburgh, 13; at Cambridge, 15-19; in Germany, 19-27; early love of mathematics, 14; residence of, in Munich, 25; in Rome, 30; returns to England for his majority, 31; accepted as candidate for East Cornwall in 1832, 38; returned unopposed for East Corn-

wall, 40 ; opposed Irish Coercion Bill, 42 ; "goes nowhere," 47 ; friendship with the Grotes, 48 ; speech on the Ballot in 1835, 52 ; returned a second time for East Cornwall, 54 ; early interest in National Education, 54 ; determines to retire from East Cornwall, 57 ; munificence in founding the *London Review*, 59 ; visits Birmingham, 82 ; speech against Orange Lodges, 82-100 ; attacks exclusive privileges of the Guards, 100 ; letter to Mrs. Grote on death of his sister, 104 ; attitude on religious questions, 106-110 ; disappointed in his hopes of marriage, 110 ; edits the works of Thomas Hobbes, 112 ; views on marriage, 113 ; retires from representation of East Cornwall, 115 ; opposition to Corn Laws, 116 ; reproaches the Grotes for failing to give him political support, 122-126 ; attends Radical dinner at Bath, 125 ; accepts invitation to stand for Leeds, 129 ; elected for Leeds, 131-132 ; work as a Colonial Reformer, 135 ; moves for Select Committee on Transportation, 140 ; writes the report, 208 ; his early appreciation of value of the Colonies, 156 ; declines to lead Colonial expedition in person, 175-177 ; desires to become Governor of New South Wales, 170, 177 ; gives liberal financial support to Colonial development, 180-181 ; speeches on Canada, 185, 197-198, 208 ; opposes Lord John Russell's policy on Canada, 186-187 ; supports Lord Durham, 197 ; dedicates his edition of Hobbes to Grote, 212 ; holds peace meeting at Leeds, 216 ; seconds Mr. Ward's motion on Colonial Lands, 219 ; speeches against transportation, 221, 282-294 ; retires from representation of Leeds, 225 ; an ardent horticulturist and lover of trees, 226-

232 ; studies Comte, 238 ; bust now in Parliamentary Library Ottawa, 239 ; marriage, 240 ; quarrels with Mrs. Grote, 241 ; re-enters Parliament as M.P. for Southwark, 245 ; attitude on Maynooth grant and on religious equality, 246-263 ; opposed at Southwark by Mr. Miall, 251 ; supports Baron Lionel Rothschild's candidature for City of London, 259-260 ; opposes exclusion of Roman Catholics from education grant, 261-263 ; renewed work for Colonial reform, 264 ; speeches in 1850 in moving amendments to Government Bill conferred free government in Colonies, 268-274 ; refers in House of Commons to death of Buller, 274 ; moves for Royal Commission to inquire into administration of the Colonies ; renewed work against transportation, 278-279 ; speaks against Palmerston in Don Pacifico debate, 295 ; attacks Lord Derby, 304-305 ; joins Lord Aberdeen's Cabinet as First Commissioner of Works, 306-307 ; opens Kew Gardens on Sundays, 309 ; supports abandonment of Orange River Territory, 315-317 ; replies to attack by Cobden in House of Commons, 327-328 ; defends payment of interest on Russo-Dutch loan, 329-330 ; becomes Secretary of State for the Colonies, 333 ; illness and death, 339-342

Monkey-puzzle, 228-229
 Monkswell, Lord, 239
 Morley, the Rt. Hon. John, M.P., 273
 Moshesh, Basuto chief, 323
 Munich in 1828, 25-30
 Muter, Joseph (*see* Straton)

Napier, Sir George, 313
 Napier, Sir William, 100
 National Political Union, 82
 Newcastle, Duke of, 306

- New South Wales, 164
 New Zealand Association, 154, 162, 208
 New Zealand, Mr. Francis Molesworth a founder of the Colony of, 165-168
New Zealand Journal on Mr. Francis A. Molesworth, 167-168
 New Zealand Land Company, 178-181
- O'Connell, Mr. D., M.P., 78
 Orange Lodges, speech by Sir Wm. Molesworth against, 83-84
 Orange River Territory, Sir Wm. Molesworth's undelivered speech supporting its abandonment, 315-317; circumstances of its abandonment, 322-323
 Ormerod, Miss E. A., edits Miss Caroline Molesworth's journals, 230
 Ottawa, bust of Sir Wm. Molesworth in Parliamentary Library at, 239
 Ourry, Admiral, Commissioner of Plymouth, 9
 Ourry, Louis, 8
 Ourry, Miss, marries into the Molesworth family, 8
- Palmerston, Viscount, 71, 295-302, 306, 329, 332, 333, 341
 Panizzi, Mr. A., 297
 Parkes, Joseph, 52, 75, 76, 78, 82
 Peel, Sir Robert, 37, 71, 245
 Pencarrow, seat of the Molesworth family, 7, 226; rare collection of trees at, 228
 "Philosophic Radicals," 14, 58, 114
Place, Life of Francis, by Graham Wallas, 34 n., 120-121, 189
 Plunkett, Mr. Randall, M.P., 96
- Queen Adelaide, 33
 Queen Victoria, 128, 131
- Raeburn's portrait of Sir Arscott Ourry Molesworth, 10
 Railway travelling in 1837, 132
- Rashleigh, Sir Colman, 116
 Reeve, Mr. Henry, 307
 Reform Bill of 1832, 33, 119; of 1831, 35-38
 Reform Club, formation of, 70-81
Review, London, 54-69
 Rintoul, Mr. (editor of the *Spectator*), 123, 138, 157
 Ripon, Lord, as Colonial Secretary, 185
 Roebuck, Mr. J. A., M.P., 61, 62, 111, 124, 125, 126, 159, 243, 271
 Roman Catholics and education grant, 261-263
 Rome, Sir William visits, in 1829, 30
 Rothschild, Baron Lionel, contests City of London, 259
 Russell, Lord John, 43, 71, 97, 141, 179, 185-188, 261-262, 282, 286, 306, 332, 334
 Russell, the Rev. "Jack," 18
 Russo-Dutch loan of 1814, 329
- St. John's College, Cambridge, Sir Wm. Molesworth entered at, 15
 Salisbury, Bishop of, Grand Chaplain of Orange Lodges, 88
 Scott, Sir Walter, 13, 15
 Sebastopol, fall of, 339
 Senior, Mr. Nassau, 155, 158
 Shrewsbury, Earl of, 297
 Simpson, Mrs., *Many Memories*, 156 n.
 Slavery, abolition of, 318
 Smith, Mr. Goldwin, 273
 Smith, Sir Harry, 312-313
 South Africa in 1852, 310-325
 South Australian Association, 154, 162-164
 Southwark election in 1845, 245-256; in 1852, 302; in 1860, 5
 Stephen, Sir James, 160, 161, 179
 Straton, General Sir Joseph, 19, 19 n., 23, 24, 45
 Sussex, Duke of, 78
 Sutton Manners (Lord Abercrombie), 73 n., 74 n.
 Swan River Settlement, Western Australia, 139
 Sydenham, Lord, 196, 274

- Tennyson, Lord, 16, 108; Mill's article in *London Review* on, 63
- Tetcott, Devon, a seat of Sir Wm. Molesworth, 11 *n.*, 18
- Thackeray, W. M., 17, 27, 108
- Thompson, General Perronet, 64
- Thompson, Mr. Poulett, afterwards Lord Sydenham, 196, 274
- Thring, Mr. Henry (now Lord), on the Colonies, 159, 270
- Tocqueville, De, 64
- Transportation Committee, 1837-38, 140-153, 208; members of, 140; renewed work by Sir Wm. Molesworth against, 282
- Trelawney, "Greek," 28
- Trelawney, Mr. William Salusbury, 40
- Trevelyan's *Life of Lord Macaulay* quoted, 36
- Trinity College, Cambridge, Sir Wm. Molesworth migrates to, 16
- Ullathorne, Dr. (afterwards R.C. Bishop of Birmingham), on transportation, 145-146, 152
- Van Diemen's Land and transportation, 284-294
- Victoria, Princess (afterwards Queen Victoria), 99
- Victoria, Queen, 128, 131
- Vienna Congress, 332, 333
- Villiers, the Hon. Charles, 80, 243, 298
- Wakefield, Edward Gibbon, 2, 3, 135, 138 *n.*, 139, 141, 152, 153, 157, 161, 162, 169-181, 200-202, 273; *Life of*, by Dr. Garnett, 3, 137-138, 194
- Wallas, Mr. Graham, *Life of Francis Place*, 34 *n.*, 120-121, 189
- War threatened between France and England in 1840, 216
- Warburton, Mr. Henry, M.P., 102, 103
- Ward, Mr., M.P., 118; Sir Wm. Molesworth seconds his resolution on Colonial Lands, 219
- Watts, Dr., 108 *n.*, 109 *n.*
- Wellington, Duke of, 34, 162-163
- Wellington, New Zealand, 163, 168
- West, Mrs. Temple, afterwards Lady Molesworth, 240
- Westminster Review*, 64
- Whateley, Dr., Archbishop of Dublin, opposition of, to transportation, 143, 147, 148, 152
- Wilberforce, Bishop, 256
- Wilberforce, William, 152
- William IV. and the Reform Bill, 37-38; death of, 127
- Wood, Alderman, 62
- Wood, Sir Charles, 306
- Woolcombe, Mr. T., 65, 97, 98, 130-133, 165, 181, 217, 230, 231

THE END

